

Part 10

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The  
**OUTLINE of HISTORY**  
BY  
**H. G. WELLS.**



HARRY GALE,  
BOOKSELLER, STATIONER  
& NEWSAGENT,  
STAINES





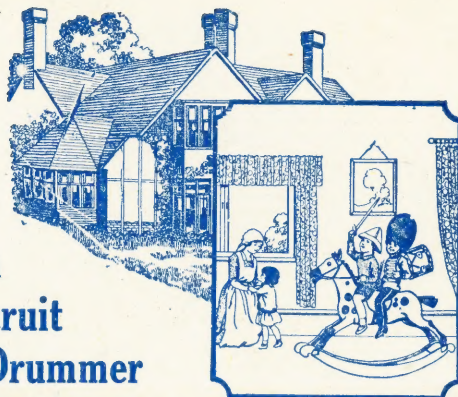
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From a photograph by Brogi.

THE APPIAN WAY TO-DAY.





Syracuse, Hiero, a successor of that Dionysius to whom Plato had gone as resident court philosopher. A band of mercenaries who had been in the service of Syracuse seized upon Messina (289 B.C.), and raided the trade of Syracuse so that at last Hiero was forced to take measures to suppress them (270 B.C.). Thereupon Carthage, which was also vitally concerned in the suppression of piracy, came to his aid, and put in a Carthaginian garrison at Messina. This was an altogether justifiable proceeding. Now that Tyre had been destroyed, the only capable guardian of sea law in the Mediterranean was Carthage, and the suppression of piracy was her task by habit and tradition.

The pirates of Messina appealed to Rome, and the accumulating jealousy and fear of Carthage decided the Roman people to help them. An expedition was dispatched to Messina under the consul Appius Claudius (the third Appius Claudius we have had to mention in this history).

So began the first of the most wasteful and disastrous series of wars that has ever darkened

upon the town Agrigentum. This the Romans besieged, and a period of trench warfare ensued. Both sides suffered greatly from plague and irregular supplies; the Romans lost 30,000 men; but in the end (261 B.C.) the Carthaginians evacuated the place and retired to their fortified towns on the western coast of the island of which Lilybaeum was the chief. These they could supply easily from the African mainland, and, as long as their sea ascendancy held, they could exhaust any Roman effort against them.

And now a new and very extraordinary phase of the war began. The Romans came out upon the sea, and to the astonishment of the Carthaginians and themselves defeated the Carthaginian fleet. Since the days of Salamis there had been a considerable development of naval architecture. Then the ruling type of battleship was a trireme, a galley with three banks (rows) of oars; now the leading Carthaginian battleship was a quinquereme, a much bigger galley with five banks of oars, which could ram or shear the oars of any feebler vessel. The Romans had

the history of mankind. But this is how one historian, soaked with the fantastic political ideas of our times, is pleased to write of this evil expedition. "The Romans knew they were entering on war with Carthage; but the political instincts of the people were right, for a Carthaginian garrison on the Sicilian Straits would have been a dangerous menace to the peace of Italy." So they protected the peace of Italy from this "menace" by a war that lasted nearly a quarter of a century. They wrecked their own slowly acquired political *morale* in the process.

The Romans captured Messina, and Hiero deserted from the Carthaginians to the Romans. Then for some time the struggle centred



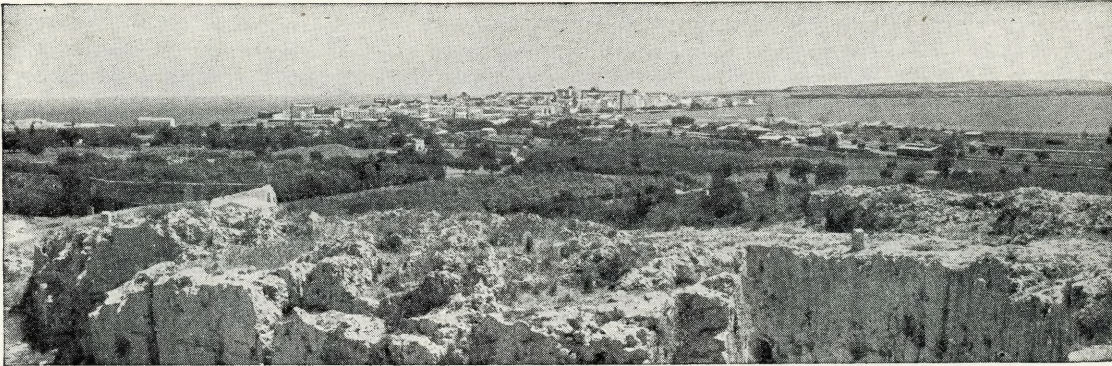


Photo : Brogi.

SYRACUSE.

come into the war with no such shipping. Now they set to work to build quinqueremes, being helped, it is said, in their designing by one of these Carthaginian vessels coming ashore. In two months they built a hundred quinqueremes and thirty triremes. But they had no skilled navigators, no experienced oarsmen, and these deficiencies they remedied partly with the assistance of their Greek allies and partly by the invention of new tactics. Instead of relying upon ramming or breaking the oars of the adversary, which demanded more seamanship than they possessed, they decided to board the enemy, and they constructed a sort of long drawbridge on their ships, held up to a mast by a pulley and with grappling-hooks and spikes at the end. They also loaded their galleys with soldiers. Then as the Carthaginian rammed or swept alongside, this *corvus*, as it was called, could be let down and the boarders could swarm aboard him.

Simple as this device was, it proved a complete success. It changed the course of the war and the fate of the world. The small amount of invention needed to counteract the *corvus* was not apparently within the compass of the Carthaginian rulers. At the battle of Mylæ (260 B.C.) the Romans gained their first naval victory and captured or destroyed fifty vessels. At the great battle of Ecnomus (256 B.C.), "probably the greatest naval engagement of antiquity,"<sup>1</sup> in which seven or eight hundred big ships were engaged, the Carthaginians showed that they had learnt nothing from their former disaster. According to rule they outmanœuvred and defeated the Romans, but the *corvus* again

defeated them. The Romans sank thirty vessels and captured sixty-four.

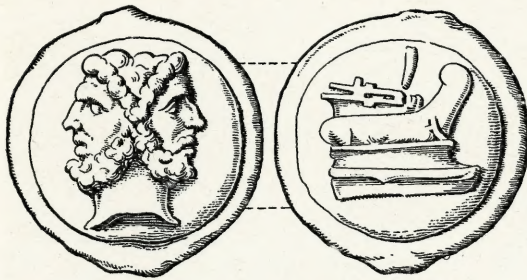
Thereafter the war continued with violent fluctuations of fortune, but with a continuous demonstration of the greater energy, solidarity, and initiative of the Romans. After Ecnomus the Romans invaded Africa by sea, and sent an insufficiently supported army, which after many successes and the capture of Tunis (within ten miles of Carthage) was completely defeated. They lost their sea ascendancy through a storm, and regained it by building a second fleet of two hundred and twenty ships within three months. They captured Palermo, and defeated a great Carthaginian army there (251 B.C.), capturing one hundred and four elephants, and making such a triumphal procession into Rome as that city had never seen before. They made an unsuccessful siege of Lilybæum, the chief surviving Carthaginian stronghold in Sicily. They lost their second fleet in a great naval battle at Drepanum (249 B.C.), losing one hundred and eighty out of two hundred and ten vessels; and a third fleet of one hundred and twenty battleships and eight hundred transports was lost in the same year partly in battle and partly in a storm.

For seven years a sort of war went on between the nearly exhausted combatants, a war of raids and feeble sieges, during which the Carthaginians had the best of it at sea. Then by a last supreme effort Rome launched a fourth fleet of two hundred keels, and defeated the last strength of the Carthaginians at the battle of the Ægatian Isles (241 B.C.), after which Carthage (240 B.C.) sued for peace.

By the terms of this peace, all Sicily, except for

<sup>1</sup> J. Wells *op. cit.*





**Roman As (bronze, 4<sup>th</sup> Cent. B.C. Half size.)**

A COPPER COIN SUCH AS THE ABOVE WEIGHED 290 g. HEAD OF JANUS ON ONE SIDE; ON REVERSE, PROW OF A GALLEY (A COMMON DESIGN ON GREEK COINS).

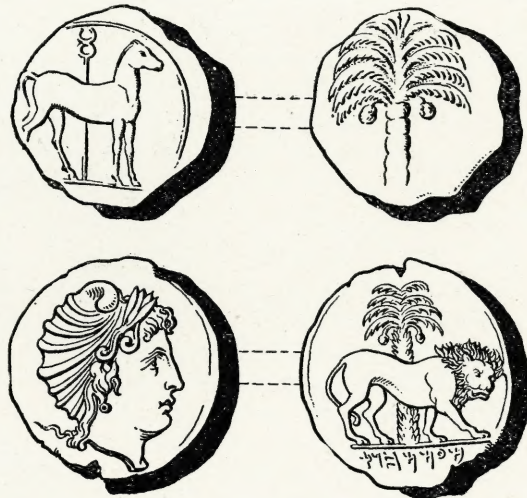
the dominions of Hiero of Syracuse, became an "estate" of the Roman people. There was no such process of assimilation as had been practised in Italy; Sicily became a conquered province, paying tribute and yielding profit like the provinces of the older empires. And, in addition, Carthage paid a war indemnity of 3,200 talents (= £788,000).

### § 5

For twenty-two years there was peace between Rome and Carthage. It was peace without prosperity. Both combatants were suffering from the want and disorganization that follow naturally and necessarily upon all great wars. The territories of Carthage seethed with violent disorder; the returning soldiers could not get their pay, and mutinied and looted; the land went uncultivated. We read of horrible cruelties in the suppression of these troubles by Hamilcar, the Carthaginian general; of men being crucified by the thousand. Sardinia and Corsica revolted. The "peace of Italy" was scarcely happier. The Gauls rose and marched south; they were defeated, and 40,000 of them killed at Telamon. It is manifest that Italy was incomplete until it reached the Alps. Roman colonies were planted in the valley of the Po, and the great northward artery, the Via Flaminia, was begun. But it shows the moral and intellectual degradation of this post-war period that when the Gauls were threatening Rome, human sacrifices were proposed and carried out. The old Carthaginian sea law was broken up—it may have been selfish and monopolistic, but it was at least orderly—the Adriatic swarmed with

Illyrian pirates, and as the result of a quarrel arising out of this state of affairs, Illyria, after two wars, had to be annexed as a second "province." By sending expeditions to annex Sardinia and Corsica, which were Carthaginian provinces in revolt, the Romans prepared the way for the Second Punic War.

The First Punic War had tested and demonstrated the relative strength of Rome and Carthage. With a little more wisdom on either side, with a little more magnanimity on the part of Rome, there need never have been a renewal of the struggle. But Rome was an ungracious conqueror. She seized Corsica and Sardinia on no just grounds, she increased the indemnity by 1,200 talents, she set a limit, the Ebro, to Carthaginian developments in Spain. There was a strong party in Carthage, led by Hanno, for the propitiation of Rome; but it was natural that many Carthaginians should come



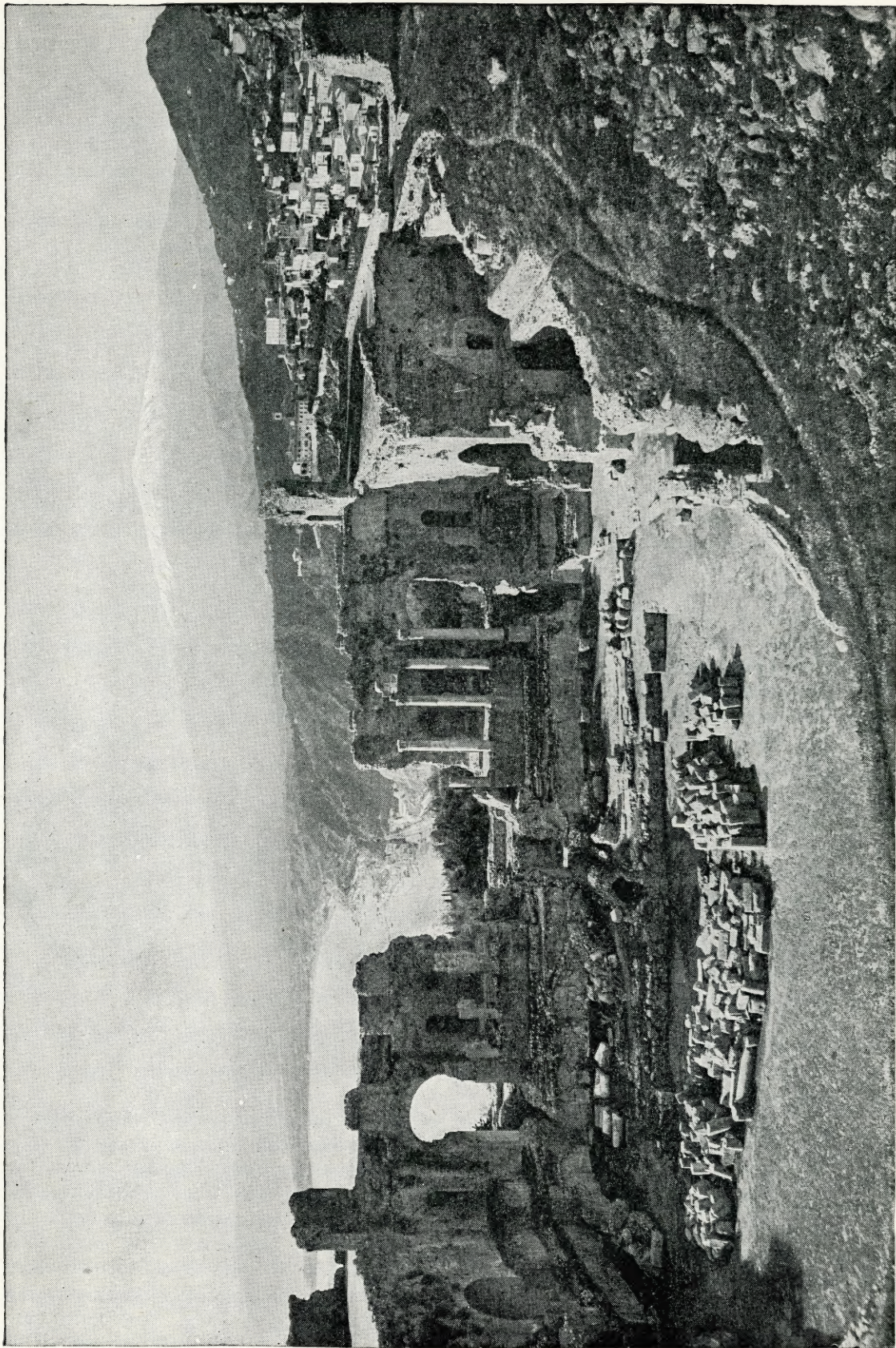
**Carthaginian coins.**

The lower coin was struck for the pay of the Carthaginian mercenaries during the Second Punic War. Note, in both, the palm-tree, an essentially Carthaginian symbol.

to regard their national adversary with a despairing hostility.

So began that age-long hostility between the lands north and south of the Mediterranean which lasts down to our own day, the conflict of the Semiticized Berber and the Aryanized south European, in spite of the fact that these two divisions of Mediterranean man have so much physically in common. Henceforth they





*Photo : Brogi.*

TAORMINA, MAGNA GRÆCIA.

"The theatre (*Græki*) at Taormina, reconstructed during the Roman period, was wonderfully situated, opening on the sea and on Mount Etna."—Dutuy (*Histoire des Grecs*).



took different sides in religion, in language, in costume and culture.

Hatred is one of the passions that can master a life, and there is a type of temperament very prone to it, ready to see life in terms of vindictive melodrama, ready to find stimulus and satisfaction in frightful demonstrations of "justice" and revenge. The fears and jealousies of the squatting-place and the cave still bear their dark blossoms in our lives; we are not four hundred generations yet from the old Stone Age. Great wars, as all Europe knows, give this "hating" temperament the utmost scope, and the greed and pride and cruelty that the First Punic War had released were now producing a rich crop of anti-foreign monomania. The outstanding figure upon the side of Carthage was a great general and administrator, Hamilcar Barca, who now set himself to circumvent and shatter Rome. He was the father-in-law of Hasdrubal and the father of a boy Hannibal, destined to be the most dreaded enemy that ever scared the Roman Senate. The most obvious course before Carthage was the reconstruction of its fleet and naval administration, and the recovery of sea power, but this, it would seem, Hamilcar could not effect. As an alternative he resolved to organize Spain as the base of a land attack upon Italy. He went to Spain as governor in 236 B.C., and Hannibal related afterwards that his father then—he was a boy of eleven—made him vow deathless hostility to the Roman power.

This quasi-insane concentration of the gifts and lives of the Barca family upon revenge is but one instance of the narrowing and embitterment of life that the stresses and universal sense of insecurity of this great struggle produced in the minds of men. A quarter of a century of war had left the whole western world miserable and harsh. While the eleven-year-old Hannibal was taking his vow of undying hatred, there was running about a farmhouse of Tusculum a small but probably very disagreeable child of two named Marcus Porcius Cato. This boy lived to be eighty-five years old, and his ruling passion seems to have been hatred for any human happiness but his own. He was a good soldier, and had a successful political career. He held a command in Spain, and distinguished himself by his cruelties. He posed

as a champion of religion and public morality, and under this convenient cloak carried on a lifelong war against everything that was young, gracious, or pleasant. Whoever roused his jealousy, incurred his moral disapproval. He was energetic in the support and administration of all laws against dress, against the personal adornment of women, against entertainments and free discussion. He was so fortunate as to be made censor, which gave him great power over the private lives of public people. He was thus able to ruin public opponents through private scandals. He expelled Manlius from the Senate for giving his wife a kiss in the daytime in the sight of their daughter. He persecuted Greek literature, about which, until late in life, he was totally ignorant. Then he read and admired Demosthenes. He wrote in Latin upon agriculture and the ancient and lost virtues of Rome. From these writings much light is thrown upon his qualities. One of his maxims was that when a slave was not sleeping he should be working. Another was that old oxen and slaves should be sold off. He left the war horse that had carried him through his Spanish campaigns behind him when he returned to Italy in order to save freight. He hated other people's gardens, and cut off the supply of water for garden use in Rome. After entertaining company, when dinner was over he would go out to correct any negligence in the service with a leather thong. He admired his own virtues very greatly, and insisted upon them in his writings. There was a battle at Thermopylæ against Antiochus the Great, of which he wrote, "those who saw him charging the enemy, routing and pursuing them, declared that Cato owed less to the people of Rome than the people of Rome owed to Cato."<sup>1</sup> In his old age Cato became lascivious, and misconducted himself with a woman slave. Finally, when his son protested against this disorder of their joint household, he married a young wife, the daughter of his secretary, who was not in a position to refuse his offer. (What became of the woman slave is not told. Probably he sold her.) This compendium of all the old Roman virtues died at an advanced age, respected and feared. Almost his last public act was to urge on the Third Punic War and the final destruc-

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Life of Cato*.



tion of Carthage. He had gone to Carthage as a commissioner to settle certain differences between Carthage and Numidia, and he had been shocked and horrified to find some evidences of prosperity and even of happiness in that country.

From the time of that visit onward Cato concluded every speech he made in the Senate by croaking out "*Delenda est Carthago*" ("Carthage must be destroyed").

Such was the type of man that rose to prominence in Rome during the Punic struggle, such was the protagonist of Hannibal and the Carthaginian *revanche*, and by him and by Hannibal we may judge the tone and quality of the age.

The two great western powers, and Rome perhaps more than Carthage, were strained mentally and morally by the stresses of the First War. The evil side of life was uppermost. The history of the Second and Third Punic Wars (219 to 201 and 149 to 146 B.C.), it is plain, is not the history of perfectly sane peoples. It is nonsense for historians to write of the "political instincts" of the Romans or Carthaginians. Quite

other instincts were loose. The red eyes of the ancestral ape had come back into the world. It was a time when reasonable men were howled down or murdered; the true spirit of the age is shown in the eager examination for signs and portents of the still quivering livers of those human victims who were sacrificed in Rome during the panic before the battle of Telamon. The western world was indeed black with homicidal monomania. Two great peoples, both very necessary to the world's development, fell foul of one another,

and at last Rome succeeded in murdering Carthage.

## § 6

We can only tell very briefly here of the particulars of the Second and Third Punic Wars. We have told how Hamilcar began to organize Spain, and how the Romans forbade him to cross the Ebro. He died in 228 B.C., and was followed by his son-in-

law Hasdrubal, who was assassinated in 221 B.C., and succeeded by Hannibal, who was now twenty-six. The actual war was precipitated by the Romans making a breach of their own regulations, and interfering with affairs south of the Ebro. Whereupon Hannibal marched straight through the south of Gaul, and crossed the Alps (218 B.C.) into Italy.

The history of the next fifteen years is the story of the most brilliant and futile raid in history. For fifteen years Hannibal held out in Italy, victorious and unconquered. The Roman generals were no match for the Carthaginian, and whenever they met him

they were beaten. But one Roman general, P. Cornelius Scipio, had the strategic sense to take a course that robbed all Hannibal's victories of fruit. At the outbreak of the war he had been sent by sea to Marseilles to intercept Hannibal; he arrived three days late, and, instead of pursuing him, he sent on his army into Spain to cut up Hannibal's supplies and reinforcements. Throughout all the subsequent war there remained this Roman army of Spain between Hannibal and his base. He was left "in the air," in-

The Second Punic War.

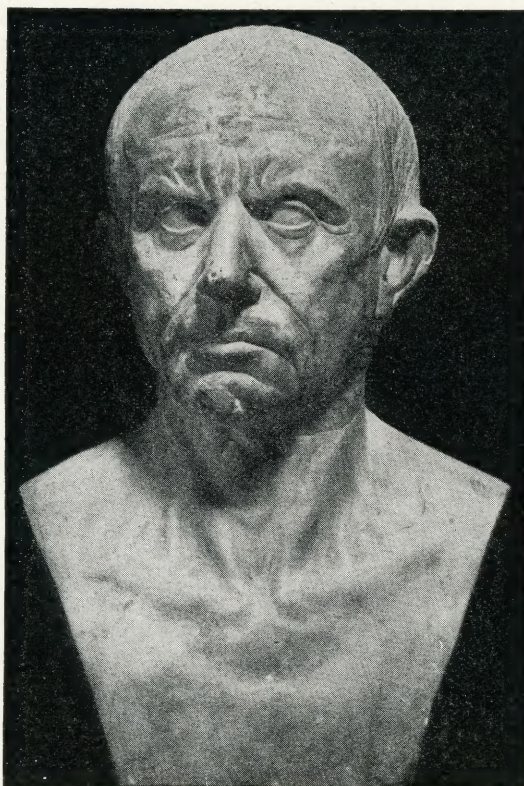


Photo: Anderson.

CATO.

(Bust in the Capitoline Museum, Rome.)





Photo: Anderson.

SPOLETO—A TYPICAL ITALIAN HILL-TOWN. FAMOUS IN EARLY ROMAN HISTORY FOR ITS REPULSE OF HANNIBAL.

capable of conducting sieges or establishing conquests.

Whenever he met the Romans in open fight he beat them. He gained two great victories in North Italy, and won over the Gauls to his side. He pressed south into Etruria, and ambushed, surrounded, and completely destroyed a Roman army at Lake Trasimene. In 216 B.C. he was assailed by a vastly superior Roman force under Varro at Cannæ, and destroyed it utterly. Fifty thousand men are said to have been killed and ten thousand prisoners taken. He was, however, unable to push on and capture Rome because he had no siege equipment.

But Cannæ produced other fruits. A large part of Southern Italy came over to Hannibal, including Capua, the city next in size to Rome, and the Macedonians allied themselves with him. Moreover, Hiero of Syracuse, the faithful ally of Rome, was now dead, and his successor Hieronymus turned over to the Carthaginians. The Romans carried on the war, however, with great toughness and resolution; they refused to treat with Hannibal after Cannæ, they pressed a slow but finally successful blockade and siege of Capua, and a Roman army set itself to reduce Syracuse. The siege of Syracuse is chiefly memorable for the brilliant inventions of the philosopher Archimedes, which long held the Romans at bay. We have already named this Archimedes as one of the pupils and corre-

spondents of the school of the Alexandrian Museum. He was killed in the final storm of the town. Tarentum (209 B.C.), Hannibal's chief port and means of supply from Carthage, at last followed Syracuse (212 B.C.) and Capua (211 B.C.), and his communications became irregular.

Spain also was wrested bit by bit from the Carthaginian grip. When at last reinforcements for Hannibal under his brother Hasdrubal (not to be confused with his brother-in-law of the same name who was assassinated) struggled through into Italy, they were destroyed at the battle of the Metaurus (207 B.C.), and the first news that came to Hannibal of the disaster was the hacked-off head of his brother thrown into his camp.

Thereafter Hannibal was blockaded into Calabria, the toe of Italy. He had no forces for further operations of any magnitude, and he returned at last to Carthage in time to command the Carthaginians in the last battle of the war.

This last battle, the battle of Zama (202 B.C.), was fought close to Carthage.

It was the first defeat Hannibal experienced, and so it is well to give a little attention to the personality of his conqueror, Scipio Africanus the Elder, who stands out in history as a very fine gentleman indeed, a great soldier and a generous man. We have already mentioned a



certain P. Cornelius Scipio who struck at Hannibal's base in Spain ; this was his son ; until after Zama this son bore the same name of P. Cornelius Scipio, and then the surname of Africanus was given him. (The younger Scipio Africanus, Scipio Africanus Minor, who was later to end the Third Punic War, was the adopted son of this first Scipio Africanus, Scipio Africanus the Elder.) Scipio Africanus was

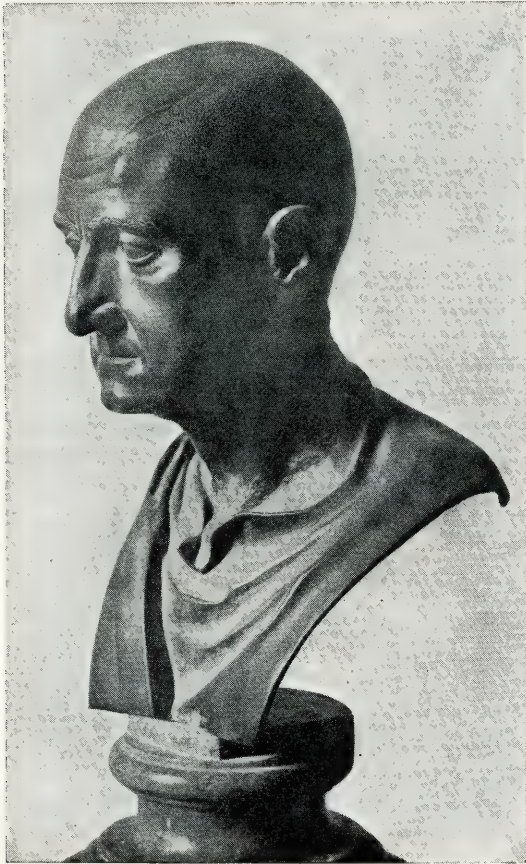


Photo : Brogi.

SCIPIO AFRICANUS.  
(From the Naples Museum.)

everything that aroused the distrust, hatred, and opposition of old-fashioned Romans of the school of Cato. He was young, he was happy and able, he spent money freely, he was well versed in Greek literature, and inclined rather to Phrygian novelties in religion than to the sterner divinities of Rome. And he did not believe in the extreme discretion that then ruled Roman strategy.

After the early defeats of the Second Punic War, Roman military operations were domi-

nated by the personality of a general, Fabius, who raised the necessity of avoiding battle with Hannibal into a kind of sacred principle. For ten years "Fabian tactics" prevailed in Italy. The Romans blockaded, cut up convoys, attacked stragglers, and ran away whenever Hannibal appeared. No doubt it was wise for a time after their first defeats to do this sort of thing, but the business of the stronger power, and Rome was the stronger power throughout the Second Punic War, is not to tolerate an interminable war, but to repair losses, discover able generals, train better armies, and destroy the enemy power. Decision is one of the duties of strength.

To such men as young Scipio, the sly, ineffective artfulness of Fabianism, which was causing both Italy and Carthage to bleed slowly to death, was detestable. He clamoured for an attack upon Carthage itself.

"But Fabius, on this occasion, filled the city with alarms, as if the commonwealth was going to be brought into the most extreme danger by a rash and indiscreet young man ; in short, he scrupled not to do or say anything he thought likely to dissuade his countrymen from embracing the proposal. With the Senate he carried his point. But the people believed that his opposition to Scipio proceeded either from envy of his success, or from a secret fear that if this young hero should perform some signal exploit, put an end to the war, or even remove it out of Italy, his own slow proceedings through the course of so many years might be imputed to indolence or timidity. . . . He applied to Crassus, the colleague of Scipio, and endeavoured to persuade him not to yield that province to Scipio, but, if he thought it proper to conduct the war in that manner, to go himself against Carthage. Nay, he even hindered the raising of money for that expedition, so that Scipio was obliged to find the supplies as he could. . . . He endeavoured to prevent the young men who offered to go as volunteers from giving in their names, and loudly declared, both in the Senate and Forum, 'That Scipio did not only himself avoid Hannibal, but intended to carry away with him the remaining strength of Italy, persuading the young men to abandon their parents, their wives, and native city, while an unsubdued and potent enemy was still at their doors.' With these assertions he so



terrified the people, that they allowed Scipio to take with him only the legions that were in Sicily, and three hundred of those men who had served him with so much fidelity in Spain. . . . After Scipio was gone over into Africa, an account was soon brought to Rome of his glorious and wonderful achievements. This account was followed by rich spoils, which confirmed it. A Numidian king was taken prisoner; two camps were burned and destroyed; and in them a vast number of men, arms, and horses; and the Carthaginians sent orders to Hannibal to quit his fruitless hopes in Italy, and return home to defend his own country. Whilst every tongue was applauding these exploits of Scipio, Fabius proposed that his successor should be appointed, without any shadow or reason for it, except what this well-known maxim implies: viz., 'That it is dangerous to trust affairs of such importance to the fortune of one man, because it is not likely that he will be always successful.' . . . Nay, even when Hannibal embarked his army and quitted Italy, Fabius ceased not to disturb the general joy and to damp the spirits of Rome, for he took the liberty to affirm, 'That the commonwealth was now come to her last and worst trial; that she had the most reason to dread the efforts of Hannibal when he should arrive in Africa, and attack her sons under the walls of Carthage; that Scipio would have to do with an army yet warm with the blood of so many Roman generals, dictators, and consuls.' The city was alarmed with these declamations, and though the war was removed into Africa, the danger seemed to approach nearer Rome than ever."

Before the battle of Zama there were a brief truce and negotiations, which broke down through the fault of the Carthaginians. As with the battle of Arbela, so the exact day of the battle of Zama can be fixed by an eclipse, which in this case occurred during the fighting. The Romans had been joined by the Numidians, the hinterland people of Carthage, under their king Massinissa, and this gave them—for the first time in any battle against Hannibal—a great superiority of cavalry. Hannibal's cavalry wings were driven off, while at the same time the sounder discipline of Scipio's infantry enabled them to open lanes for the charge of the Carthaginian war elephants without being

thrown into confusion. Hannibal attempted to extend his infantry line to envelop the Roman infantry mass, but while at Cannæ all the advantage of training and therefore of manœuvring power had been on his side, and he had been able to surround and massacre a crowd of infantry, he now found against him an infantry line better than his own. His own line broke as it extended, the Roman legion charged home, and the day was lost. The Roman cavalry came back from the pursuit of Hannibal's horse to turn what was already a defeat into a disastrous rout.

Carthage submitted without any further struggle. The terms were severe, but they left it possible for her to hope for an honourable future. She had to abandon Spain to Rome, to give up all her war fleet except ten vessels, to pay 10,000 talents (£2,400,000), and, what was the most difficult condition of all, to agree not to wage war without the permission of Rome. Finally a condition was added that Hannibal, as the great enemy of Rome, should be surrendered. But he saved his countrymen from this humiliation by flying to Asia.

These were exorbitant conditions, with which Rome should have been content. But there are nations so cowardly that they dare not merely conquer their enemies; they must *mak siccar* and destroy them. The generation of Romans that saw greatness and virtue in a man like Cato the Censor, necessarily made their country a mean ally and a cowardly victor.

## § 7

The history of Rome for the fifty-six years that elapsed between the battle of Zama and the last act of the tragedy, the Third Punic War, tells of a hard ungracious expansion of power abroad and of a slow destruction, by the usury and greed of the rich, of the free agricultural population at home.

The spirit of the nation had become harsh and base; there was no further extension of citizenship, no more generous attempts at the assimilation of congenial foreign populations. Spain was administered badly, and settled slowly and with great difficulty. Complicated interventions led to the reduction of Illyria and Macedonia to the position of tribute-paying provinces;



Rome, it was evident, was going to "tax the foreigner" now and release her home population from taxation. After 168 the old land tax was no longer levied in Italy, and the only revenue derived from Italy was from the state domains and through a tax on imports from overseas. The revenues from the province of "Asia" defrayed the expenses of the Roman state.<sup>1</sup> At home men of the Cato type were acquiring farms by loans and foreclosure, often the farms of men impoverished by war service;



Photo: Anderson.

A ROMAN PUGILIST (GLADIATOR).

they were driving the free citizens off their land, and running their farms with the pitilessly driven slave labour that was made cheap and abundant. Such men regarded alien populations abroad merely as unimported slaves. Sicily was handed over to the greedy enterprise of tax-farmers. Corn could be grown there by rich men using slaves, and imported very profitably into Rome, and so the home land could be turned over to cattle and sheep feeding. Consequently a drift of the uprooted Italian population to the towns, and particularly to Rome, began.

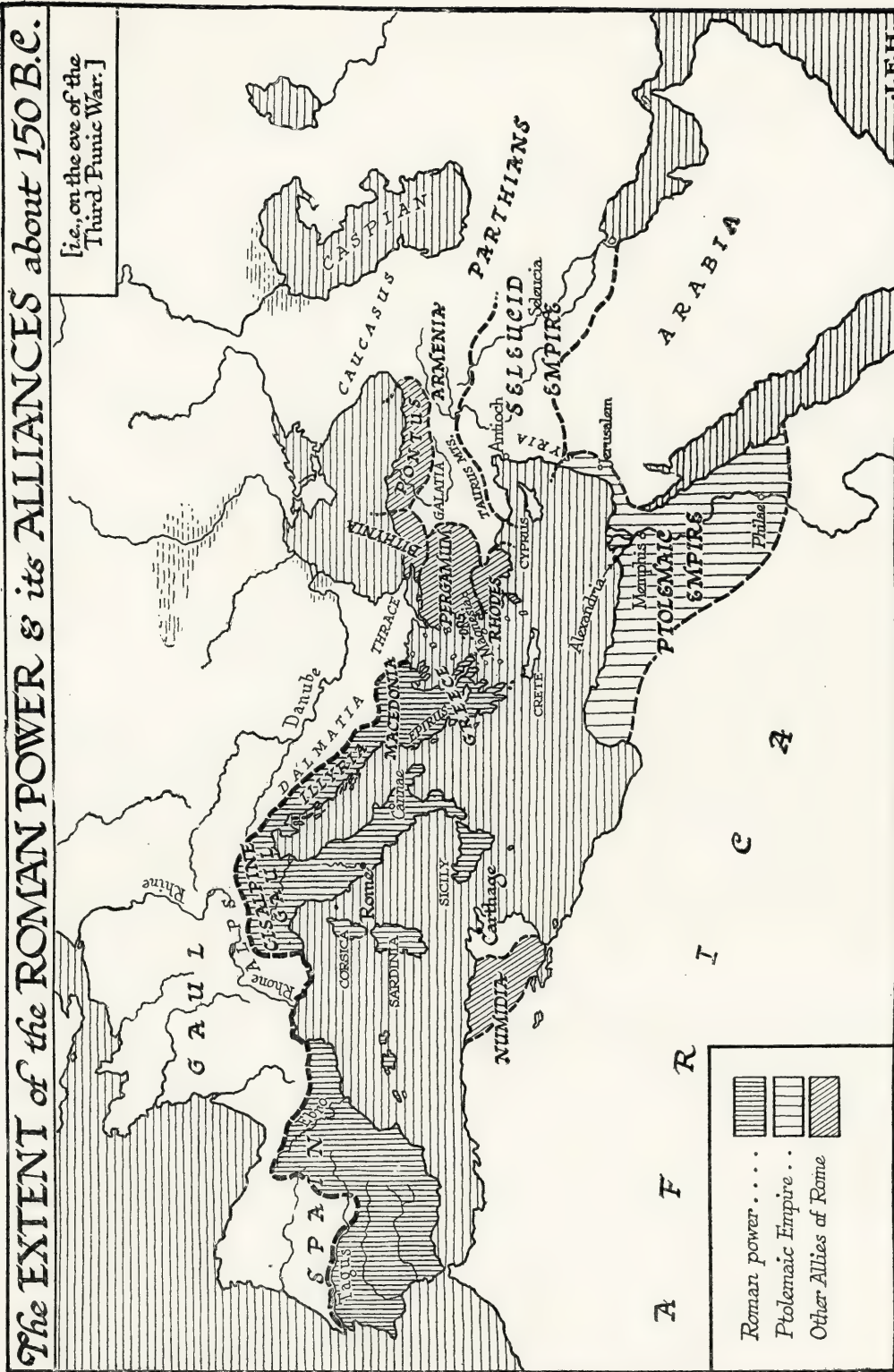
<sup>1</sup> Mommsen says the other provinces cost as much as they paid.

Of the first conflicts of the spreading power of Rome with the Seleucids, and how she formed an alliance with Egypt, we can tell little here, nor of the tortuous fluctuations of the Greek cities under the shadow of her advance until they fell into actual subjugation. A map must suffice to show the extension of her empire at this time.

The general grim baseness of the age was not without its protesting voices. We have already told how the wasting disease of the Second Punic War, a disease of the state which was producing avaricious rich men exactly as diseases of the body will sometimes produce great pustules, was ended by the vigour of Scipio Africanus. When it had seemed doubtful whether the Senate would let him go as the Roman general, he had threatened an appeal to the people. Thereafter he was a marked man for the senatorial gang, who were steadily changing Italy from a land of free cultivators to a land of slave-worked cattle ranches; they attempted to ruin him before ever he reached Africa; they gave him forces insufficient, as they hoped, for victory; and after the war they barred him strictly from office. Interest and his natural malice alike prompted Cato to attack him.

Scipio Africanus the Elder seems to have been of a generous and impatient temperament, and indisposed to exploit the popular discontent with current tendencies and his own very great popularity to his own advantage. He went as subordinate to his brother Lucius Scipio, when the latter commanded the first Roman army to pass into Asia. At Magnesia in Lydia a great composite army under Antiochus III, the Seleucid monarch, suffered the fate (190 B.C.) of the very similar Persian armies of a hundred and forty years before. This victory drew down upon Lucius Scipio the hostility of the Senate, and he was accused of misappropriating moneys received from Antiochus. This filled Africanus with honest rage. As Lucius stood up in the Senate with his accounts in his hands ready for the badgering of his accusers, Africanus snatched the documents from him, tore them up, and flung the fragments down. His brother, he said, had paid into the treasury 200,000 sesterii (=£2,000,000). Was he now to be pestered and tripped up upon this or that item?







When, later on, Lucius was prosecuted and condemned, Africanus rescued him by force. Being impeached, he reminded the people that the day was the anniversary of the battle of Zama, and defied the authorities amidst the plaudits of the crowd.

The Roman people seem to have liked and supported Scipio Africanus, and, after an interval of two thousand years, men must like him still. He was able to throw torn paper in the face of the Senate, and when Lucius was attacked again, one of the tribunes of the people interposed his veto and quashed the proceedings. But Scipio Africanus lacked that harder alloy which makes men great democratic leaders. He was no Cæsar. He had none of the qualities that subdue a man to the base necessities of political life. After these events he retired in disgust from Rome to his estates, and there he died in the year 183 B.C.

In the same year died Hannibal. He poisoned himself in despair. The steadfast fear of the Roman Senate had hunted him from court to court. In spite of the indignant protests of Scipio, Rome in the peace negotiations had demanded his surrender from Carthage, and she continued to make this demand of every power that sheltered him. When peace was made with Antiochus III, this was one of the conditions. He was run to earth at last in Bithynia; the king of Bithynia detained him in order to send him to Rome, but he had long carried the poison he needed in a ring, and by this he died.

It adds to the honour of the name of Scipio that it was another Scipio, Scipio Nasica, who parodied Cato's *Delenda est Carthago* by ending all his speeches in the Senate with "Carthage must stand." He had the wisdom to see that the existence and stimulus of Carthage contributed to the general prosperity of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> But it was this Scipio Nasica who was responsible for the killing of Tiberius Gracchus. On the whole, he seems to have been a statesman of very distinguished abilities. He was the means of bringing the Asiatic Great Mother Goddess to Rome. "People at Rome generally were beginning to see that they would have to take over Asia. Had they any right? Nasica was sent on a mission to invite the Magna Mater at Pessinus to come to Rome. Her image nodded 'yes.' She was brought and installed in Rome. Now this is a policy of peaceful assimilation. Just as in Babylon you get gods of other cities brought to Babylon, just as

Yet it was the second Scipio Africanus, the adopted son of Scipio Africanus the Elder, who took and destroyed Carthage. The sole offence of the Carthaginians, which brought about the third and last Punic War, was that they continued to trade and prosper. Their trade was not a trade that competed with that of Rome; when Carthage was destroyed, much of her trade died with her, and North Africa entered upon a phase of economic retrogression; but her prosperity aroused that passion of envy which was evidently more powerful even than avarice in the "old Roman" type. The rich Equestrian order resented any wealth in the world but its own. Rome provoked the war by encouraging the Numidians to encroach upon Carthage until the Carthaginians were goaded to fight in despair. Rome then pounced upon Carthage, and declared she had broken the treaty! She had made war without permission.

The Carthaginians sent the hostages Rome demanded, they surrendered their arms, they prepared to surrender territory. But submission only increased the arrogance of Rome and the pitiless greed of the rich Equestrian order which swayed her counsels. She now demanded

Nabonidus (see Chap. xix. § 6) was trying to get an amicable pantheon as a way of peaceful assimilation, and failing to do so because he did not bring the priesthoods as well as the gods, so Rome was at this time thinking on the same lines. Camillus had shown the way when he suggested the invitation of Juno of Veii to Rome. Now Nasica, it may be suggested, wanted to treat Carthage in the same fashion. He opposed the destruction of Carthage in 146 (Mommsen iii. p. 23, p. 39). If he had had his way, one may guess, he would have invited the Carthaginian gods to Rome, and the corollary would have been the enfranchisement of the Carthaginian population—the treatment of the Carthaginians as equals, whose gods had been received in Rome, and stood in Rome. Mummius did the same in carrying off the statues of Greek gods to Rome, only, being stupid he did not understand why (146 B.C.)."

Nasica's visit to Pessinus was as important as the testament of Attalus. His policy is not the policy of Rome the conqueror, but Rome the assimilator. He is trying to get a nexus by a common pantheon. If this had been done, the Republic might have survived. As it was, the deification of the ruler had to provide the nexus, as in Alexander's empire. The "Synœcism of gods" or the "deification of rulers," those are the only ways of amalgamating peoples. It is a pity Alexander and Rome did not attempt the former.—J. L. M. and E. B.



that Carthage should be abandoned, and the population remove to a spot at least ten miles from the sea. This demand they made to a population that subsisted almost entirely by overseas trade !

This preposterous order roused the Carthaginians to despair. They recalled their exiles and prepared for resistance. The military efficiency of the Romans had been steadily declining through a half-century of narrow-minded and base-spirited government, and the first attacks upon the town in 149 B.C. almost ended in disaster. Young Scipio, during these

lated, there were fifty thousand Carthaginians left alive out of an estimated population of half a million. These survivors went into slavery, the whole city was burnt, the ruins were ploughed to express final destruction, and a curse was invoked with great solemnities upon anyone who might attempt to rebuild it.

In the same year (146 B.C.) the Roman Senate and Equestrians also *murdered* another great city that seemed to limit their trade monopolies, Corinth. They had a justification, for Corinth had been in arms against them, but it was inadequate justification.



Photo: Bonfils.

ALL THAT REMAINS OF CORINTH.

operations, distinguished himself in a minor capacity. The next year was also a year of failure for the incompetents of the Senate. That august body then passed from a bullying mood to one of extreme panic. The Roman populace was even more seriously scared. Young Scipio, chiefly on account of his name, although he was under the proper age, and in other respects not qualified for the office, was made consul, and bundled off to Africa to save his precious country.

There followed the most obstinate and dreadful of sieges. Scipio built a mole across the harbour, and cut off all supplies by land or sea. The Carthaginians suffered horribly from famine ; but they held out until the town was stormed. The street fighting lasted for six days, and when at last the citadel capitulated,

## § 8

We must note here, in a brief section, a change in the military system of Rome, after the

Second Punic War, that was of enormous importance in her later development. Up to that period

the Roman armies had been levies of free citizens. Fighting power

and voting power were closely connected ; the public assembly by centuries followed the paraphernalia of a military mobilization, and marched, headed by the Equestrian centuries, to the Campus Martius. The system was very like that of the Boers before the last war in South Africa. The ordinary Roman citizen, like the ordinary Boer, was a farmer ; at the summons of his country he went "on commando." The Boers were, indeed, in many

**How the  
Punic War  
undermined  
Roman  
Liberty.**



respects, the last survivors of Aryanism. They fought extraordinarily well, but at the back of their minds was an anxious desire to go back to their farms. For prolonged operations, such as the siege of Veii, the Romans reinforced and relieved their troops in relays; the Boers did much the same at the siege of Ladysmith.

The necessity for subjugating Spain after the Second Punic War involved a need for armies of a different type. Spain was too far off for periodic reliefs, and the war demanded a more thorough training than was possible with these on and off soldiers. Accordingly men were enlisted for longer terms and *paid*. So the paid soldier first appeared in Roman affairs. And to pay was added booty. Cato distributed silver treasure among his command in Spain; and it is also on record that he attacked Scipio Africanus for distributing booty among his troops in Sicily. The introduction of military pay led on to a professional army, and this, a century later, to the disarmament of the ordinary Roman citizen, who was now drifting in an impoverished state into Rome and the larger towns. The great wars had been won, the foundations of the empire had been well and truly laid by the embattled farmers of Rome before 200 B.C. In the process the embattled farmers of Rome had already largely disappeared. The change that began after the Second Punic War was completed towards the close of the century in the reorganization of the army by Marius, as we will tell in its place. After his time we shall begin to write of "the army," and then of "the legions," and we shall find we are dealing with a new kind of army altogether, no longer held together in the solidarity of a common citizenship. As that tie fails, the legions discover another in *esprit de corps*, in their common difference from and their common interest against the general community. They begin to develop a warmer interest in their personal leaders, who secure them pay and plunder. Before the Punic Wars it was the tendency of ambitious men in Rome to court the plebeians; after that time they began to court the legions.

### § 9

The history of the Roman Republic thus far, is in many respects much more modern in

flavour, especially to the American or Western European reader, than anything that has preceded it. For the first time we have something like a self-governing "nation," something larger than a mere city state, seeking to control its own destinies. For the first time

we have a wide countryside under one conception of law. We get in the Senate and the popular assembly a conflict of groups and personalities, an argumentative process of control, far more stable and enduring than any autocracy can be, and far more flexible and adaptable than any priesthood. For the first time also we encounter social conflicts comparable to our own. Money has superseded barter, and financial capital has become fluid and free; not perhaps so fluid and free as it is to-day, but much more so than it had ever been before. The Punic Wars were wars of peoples, such as were no other wars we have yet recorded. Indubitably the broad lines of our present world, the main ideas, the chief oppositions, were already appearing in those days.

But, as we have already pointed out, certain of the elementary facilities and some of the current political ideas of our time were still wanting in the Rome of the Punic Wars. There were no newspapers,<sup>1</sup> and there was practically no use of elected representatives in the popular assemblies. And another deficiency, very understandable to us nowadays, but quite beyond the scope of anyone then, was the absence of any general elementary political education at all. The plebeians of Rome had shown some glimmering of the idea that without knowledge votes cannot make men free, when they had insisted upon the publication of the

<sup>1</sup> Julius Cæsar (60 B.C.) caused the proceedings of the Senate to be published by having them written up upon bulletin boards, *in albo* (upon the white). It had been the custom to publish the annual edict of the prætor in this fashion. There were professional letter-writers who sent news by special courier to rich country correspondents, and these would copy down the stuff upon the Album (white board). Cicero, while he was governor in Cilicia, got the current news from such a professional correspondent. He complains in one letter that it was not what he wanted; the expert was too full of the chariot races and other sporting intelligence, and failed to give any view of the political situation. Obviously this news-letter system was available only for public men in prosperous circumstances.



law of the Twelve Tables; but they had never been able, it was beyond the possibilities of the time, to imagine any further extension of knowledge to the bulk of the people. It is only nowadays that men are beginning to understand fully the political significance of the maxim that "knowledge is power." Two British Trade Unions, for example, have recently set up a Labour College to meet the special needs of able working-men in history, political and social science, and the like. But education in republican Rome was the freak of the individual parent, and the privilege of wealth and leisure. It was mainly in the hands of Greeks, who were

in many cases slaves. There was a thin small stream of very fine learning and very fine thinking up to the first century of the monarchy, let Lucretius and Cicero witness, but it did not spread into the mass of the people. The ordinary Roman was not only blankly ignorant of the history of mankind, but also of the conditions of foreign peoples; he had no knowledge of economic laws nor of social possibilities. Even his own interests he did not clearly understand.

Of course, in the little city states of Greece and in that early Roman state of four hundred square miles, men acquired by talk and observation a sufficient knowledge for the ordinary duties of citizenship, but by the beginning of the Punic Wars the business was already too big and complicated for illiterate men. Yet nobody seems to have observed the gap that was opening between the citizen and his state,



Photo: Mansell.

HEAD OF A BARBARIAN PRISONER.  
(Græco-Roman bust.)

and so there is no record at all of any attempt to enlarge the citizen by instruction to meet his enlarged duties. From the second century B.C. and onward everyone is remarking upon the ignorance of the common citizen and his lack of political wisdom, everything is suffering from the lack of political solidarity due to this ignorance, but no one goes on to what we should now consider the inevitable corollary, no one proposes to destroy the ignorance complained of. There existed no means whatever for the instruction of the masses of the people in a common political and social ideal. It was only with the development of the great

propagandist religions in the Roman world, of which Christianity was the chief and the survivor, that the possibility of such a systematic instruction of great masses of people became apparent in the world. That very great political genius, the Emperor Constantine the Great, six centuries later, was the first to apprehend and to attempt to use this possibility for the preservation and the mental and moral knitting-together of the world community over which he ruled.

But it is not only in these deficiencies of news and of education and of the expedient of representative government that this political system of Rome differed from our own. True, it was far more like a modern civilized state than any other state we have considered hitherto, but in some matters it was strangely primordial and "sub-civilized." Every now and then the reader of Roman history, reading



it in terms of debates and measures, policies and campaigns, capital and labour, comes upon something that gives him much the same shock he would feel if he went down to some unknown caller in his house and extended his hand to meet the misshapen hairy paw of *Homo Neanderthalensis* and looked up to see a chinless, bestial face.

We have noted the occurrence of human sacrifice in the third century B.C., and much that we learn of the religion of republican Rome carries us far back beyond the days of decent gods, to the age of shamanism and magic. We talk of a legislative gathering, and the mind flies to Westminster; but how should we feel if we went to see the beginning of a session of the House of Lords, and discovered the Lord Chancellor, with bloody fingers, portentously fiddling about among the entrails of a newly killed sheep? The mind would recoil from Westminster to the customs of Benin. And the slavery of Rome was a savage slavery, altogether viler than the slavery of Babylon. We have had a glimpse of the virtuous Cato among his slaves in the second century B.C.

Moreover, in the third century B.C., when King Asoka was ruling India in light and gentleness, the Romans were reviving an Etruscan sport, the setting on of slaves to fight for their lives. One is reminded of West Africa again in the origin of this amusement; it grew out of the prehistoric custom of a massacre of captives at the burial of a chief. There was a religious touch about this sport, the slaves with hooks, who dragged the dead bodies out of the arena, wore masks to represent the infernal ferryman-god, Charon. In 264 B.C., the very year in which Asoka began to reign and the First Punic War began, the first recorded gladiatorial combat took place

in the forum at Rome, to celebrate the funeral of a member of the old Roman family of Brutus. This was a modest display of three couples, but soon gladiators were fighting by the hundred. The taste for these combats grew rapidly, and the wars supplied an abundance of captives.

The old Roman moralists, who were so severe upon kissing and women's ornaments and Greek philosophy, had nothing but good to say for this new development. So long as pain was inflicted, Roman morality, it would seem, was satisfied.

If republican Rome was the first of modern self-governing national communities, she was certainly the 'Neanderthal' form of them.

In the course of the next two or three centuries the gladiatorial shows of Rome grew to immense proportions. To begin with, while wars were frequent, the gladiators were prisoners of war. They came with their characteristic national weapons, tattooed Britons, Moors, Scythians, negroes, and the like, and there was perhaps some military value in these exhibitions. Then criminals of the lower classes<sup>1</sup> condemned to death were also used. The ancient world did

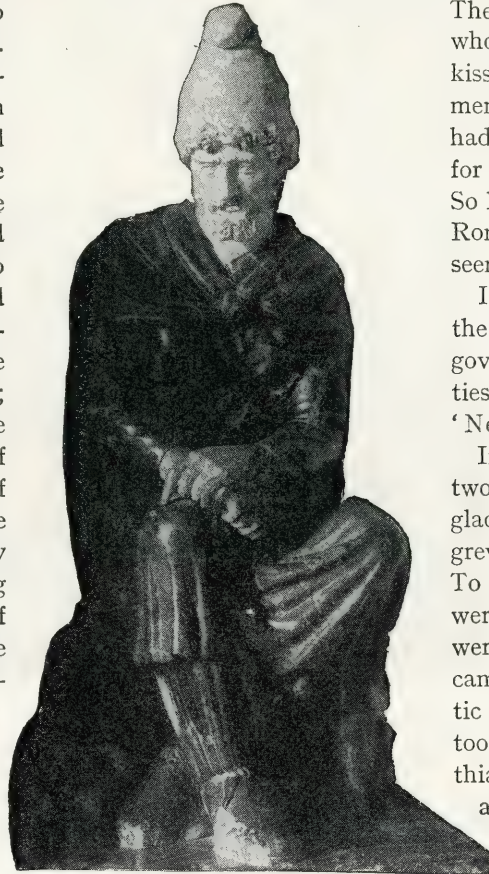


Photo: Mansell.

A CAPTIVE BARBARIAN CHIEF.

(From the Louvre.)

not understand that a criminal condemned to death still has rights, and at any rate the use of a criminal as a gladiator was not so bad as his use as "material" for the vivisectioners of the Museum at Alexandria. But as the profits of this sort of show business grew and the demand for victims increased, ordinary slaves were sold to the trainers of gladiators, and any slave who had aroused his owner's spite might find himself in an establishment for letting out gladiators. And dissipated young men who had squandered their property, and lads of spirit, would go voluntarily into the trade for a

<sup>1</sup> Seyffert, *op. cit.*





AN ETRUSCAN REPRESENTATION OF A CEREMONIAL BURNING OF THE DEAD PAINTED ON TERRA-COTTA SLABS.  
(From the Louvre.)



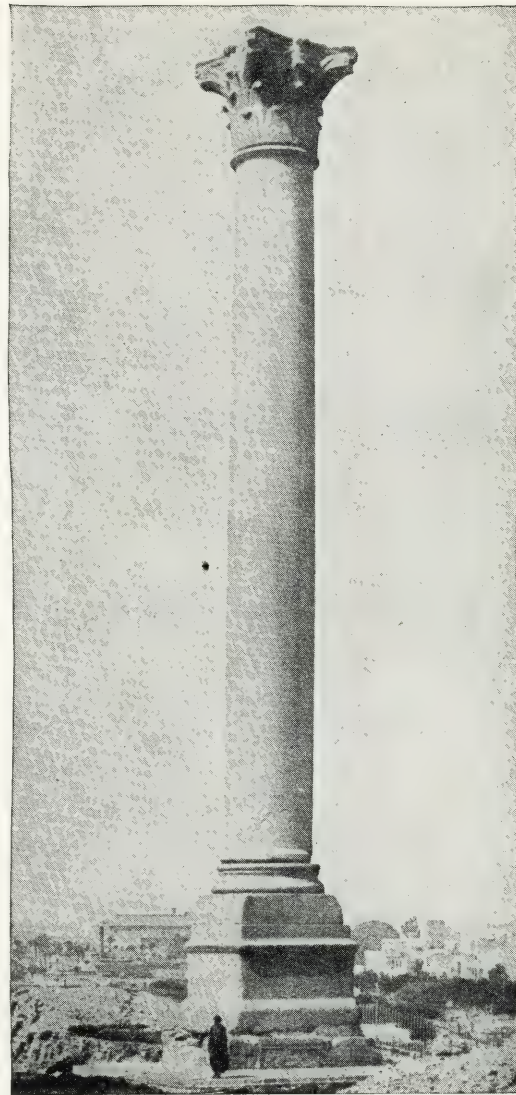




stated time, trusting to their prowess to survive. As the business developed, a new use was found for gladiators as armed retainers; rich men would buy a band, and employ it as a body-guard or hire it out for profit at the shows. The festivities of a show began with a ceremonial procession (*pompa*) and a sham fight (*prælusio*). The real fighting was heralded by trumpets. Gladiators who objected to fight for any reason were driven on by whips and hot irons. A wounded man would sometimes call for pity by holding up his forefinger. The spectators would then either wave their handkerchiefs in token of mercy, or condemn him to death by holding out their clenched fists with the thumbs up. The slain and nearly dead were dragged out to a particular place, the *spoliarium*, where they were stripped of their arms and possessions, and those who had not already expired were killed.

This organization of murder as a sport and show serves to measure the great gap in moral standards between the Roman community and our own. No doubt cruelties and outrages upon human dignity as monstrous as this still go on in the world, but they do not go on in the name of the law and without a single dissentient voice. For it is true that until the time of Seneca (first century A.D.) there is no record of any plain protest against this business. The conscience of mankind was weaker and less intelligent then than now. Presently a new power was to come into the human conscience through the spread of Christianity. The spirit of Jesus in Christianity became the great antagonist in the later Roman state of these cruel shows and of slavery, and, as Christianity spread, these two evil things dwindled and disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "A little more needs to be said on this matter. The Greeks cited gladiatorial shows as a reason for regarding the Romans as *Barbaroi*, and there were riots when some Roman proconsul tried to introduce them in Corinth. Among Romans, the better people evidently disliked them, but a sort of shyness prevented them from frankly denouncing them as cruel. For instance, Cicero, when he had to attend the Circus, took his tablets and his secretary with him, and didn't look. He expresses particular disgust at the killing of an elephant; and somebody in Tacitus (Drusus, Ann. i. 76), was unpopular because he was too fond of gladiatorial bloodshed—" *quamquam vili sanguine nimis gaudens* " ("rejoicing too much in blood, worthless



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POMPEY'S PILLAR, THE SAILOR'S LANDMARK, AT ALEXANDRIA.

"The shaft was erected as a landmark for sailors by one of the Roman governors of Egypt. In the Middle Ages it was mistakenly connected with the tomb of Pompey, who was murdered on this coast, and it has therefore been called Pompey's Pillar. This column is the only surviving monument of any size from the days of Alexandria's splendour."

blood though it was"). The games were unhesitatingly condemned by Greek philosophy, and at different times two Cynics and one Christian gave their lives in the arena, protesting against them, before they were abolished.

"I do not think Christianity had any such relation to slavery as is here stated. St. Paul's action in sending back a slave to his master, and his injunction, 'Slaves, obey your masters,' were regularly quoted on the pro-slavery side, down to the nineteenth century; on the other hand, both the popular philosophies and the Mystery religions were against slavery in their



whole tendency, and Christianity of course in time became the chief representative of these movements. Probably the best test is the number of slaves who occupied posts of honour in the religious and philosophic systems, like Epictetus, for instance, or the many slaves who hold offices in the Mithraic Inscriptions. I do not happen to know if any slaves were made Christian bishops, but by analogy I should think

it likely that some were. In all the Mystery religions, as soon as you entered the community, and had communion with God, earthly distinctions shrivelled away."—G. M.

The Spirit of Jesus is something different from formal Christianity, which I regard as the vehicle, the largely unsympathetic vehicle, by which that spirit was carried about the world.—H. G. W.

## XXVIII

### FROM TIBERIUS GRACCHUS TO THE GOD EMPEROR IN ROME

#### § I

WE have already twice likened the self-governing community of Rome to a "Neanderthal" variety of the modern "democratic" civilized state, and we shall recur again to this comparison. In form the two things, the first great primitive essay and its later relations, are extraordinarily similar; in spirit they differ very profoundly. Roman political and social life, and particularly Roman political and social life in the century between the fall of Carthage and the rise of Cæsar and Cæsarism, has a very marked general resemblance to the political and social life in such countries as the United States of America or the British Empire to-day. The resemblance is intensified by the common use, with a certain inaccuracy in every case, of such terms as "senate," "democracy," "proletariat," and the like. But everything in the Roman state was earlier, cruder, and clumsier; the injustices were more glaring, the conflicts harsher. There was comparatively little knowledge and few general ideas. Aristotle's scientific works were only beginning to be read in Rome in the first century B.C.; Ferrero,<sup>1</sup> it is true, makes Cæsar familiar with the Politics of Aristotle, and ascribes to him the dream of making a "Periclean Rome," but in doing so, Ferrero seems to be indulging in one of those lapses into picturesque romancing which are

The Science  
of Thwart-  
ing the  
Common  
Man.

at once the joy and the snare of all historical writers.

Attention has already been drawn to the profound difference between Roman and modern conditions due to the absence of a press, of any popular education or of the representative idea in the popular assembly. Our world to-day is still far from solving the problem of representation and from producing a public assembly which will really summarize, crystallize, and express the thought and will of the community; our elections are still largely an ingenious mockery of the common voter who finds himself helpless in the face of party organizations which reduce his free choice of a representative to the less unpalatable of two political hacks, but, even so, his vote, in comparison with the vote of an ordinary honest Roman citizen, is an effective instrument. Too many of our histories dealing with this period of Roman history write of "the popular party," and of the votes of the people and so forth, as though such things were as much working realities as they are to-day. But the senators and politicians of Rome saw to it that such things never did exist as clean and wholesome realities. These modern phrases are very misleading unless they are carefully qualified.

We have already described the gatherings of the popular comitia; but that clumsy assembly in sheep pens does not convey the full extent to which the gerrymandering of popular representation could be carried in Rome. Whenever there was a new enfranchisement of citizens

<sup>1</sup> *Greatness and Decline of Rome*, bk. i. ch. xi.



in Italy, there would be the most elaborate trickery and counter-trickery to enrol the new voters into as few or as many of the thirty old "tribes" as possible, or to put them into as few as possible new tribes. Since the vote was taken by tribes, it is obvious that however great the number of new additions made, if they were all got together into one tribe, their opinion would only count for one tribal vote, and similarly if they were crowded into just a few tribes, old or new. On the other hand, if they were put into too many tribes, their effect in any particular tribe might be inconsiderable. Here was the sort of work to fascinate every smart knave in politics. The *comitia tributa* could be *worked* at times so as to vote right counter to the general feeling of the people. And as we have already noted, the great mass of voters in Italy were also disenfranchised by distance. About the middle period of the Carthaginian wars there were upwards of 300,000 Roman citizens; about 100 B.C. there were more than 900,000, but in effect the voting of the popular assembly was confined to a few score thousand resident in and near Rome, and mostly men of a base type. And the Roman voters were "organized" to an extent that makes the Tammany machine of New York seem artless and honest. They belonged to clubs, *collegia sodalicia*, the latter having some elegant religious pretensions; and the rising politician working his way to office went first to the usurers and then with the borrowed money to these clubs. If the outside voters were moved enough by any question to swarm into the city, it was always possible to put off the voting by declaring the omens unfavourable. If they came in unarmed, they could be intimidated; if they brought in arms, then the cry was raised that there was a plot to overthrow the republic, and a massacre would be organized.

There can be no doubt that all Italy, all the empire was festering with discomfort, anxiety, and discontent in the century after the destruction of Carthage; a few men were growing very rich, and the majority of people found themselves entangled in an inexplicable net of uncertain prices, jumpy markets, and debts; but yet there was no way at all of stating and clearing up the general dissatisfaction. There is no

record of a single attempt to make the popular assembly a straightforward and workable public organ. Beneath the superficial appearances of public affairs struggled a mute giant of public opinion and public will, who sometimes made some great political effort, a rush to vote or such like, and sometimes broke into actual violence. So long as there was no actual violence, the Senate and the financiers kept on in their own disastrous way. Only when they were badly frightened would governing cliques or parties desist from some nefarious policy and heed the common good. The real method of popular expression in Italy in those days was not the *comitia tributa*, but the strike and insurrection, the righteous and necessary methods of all cheated or suppressed peoples. We have seen in our own days in Great Britain a decline in the prestige of parliamentary government and a drift towards unconstitutional methods on the part of the masses through exactly the same cause, through the incurable disposition of politicians to gerrymander the electoral machine until the community is driven to explosion.

For insurrectionary purposes a discontented population needs a leader, and the political history of the concluding century of Roman republicanism is a history of insurrectionary leaders and counter-revolutionary leaders. Most of the former are manifestly unscrupulous adventurers who try to utilize the public necessity and unhappiness for their own advancement. Many of the historians of this period betray a disposition to take sides, and are either aristocratic in tone or fiercely democratic; but, indeed, neither side in these complex and intricate disputes has a record of high aims or clean hands. The Senate and the rich equestrians were vulgar and greedy spirits, hostile and contemptuous towards the poor mob; and the populace was ignorant, unstable, and at least equally greedy. The Scipios in all this record shine by comparison, a group of gentlemen. To the motives of one or the other figures of the time, to Tiberius Gracchus, for example, we may perhaps extend the benefit of the doubt. But for the rest, they do but demonstrate how clever and cunning men may be, how subtle in contention, how brilliant in pretence, and how utterly wanting in wisdom or



grace of spirit. "A shambling, hairy, brutish, but probably very cunning creature with a big brain *behind*;" so someone, I think it was Sir Harry Johnston, has described *Homo neanderthalensis*.

To this day we must still use similar terms to describe the soul of the politician. The statesman has still to oust the politician from his lairs and weapon heaps. History has still to become a record of human dignity.

## § 2

Another respect in which the Roman system was a crude anticipation of our own, and different

**Finance in the Roman State.** from any preceding political system we have considered, was that it was a cash and credit-using system.

Money had been in the world as yet for only a few centuries. But its use had been growing; it was providing a fluid medium for trade and enterprise and changing economic conditions profoundly. In republican Rome, the financier and the "money" interest began to play a part recognizably similar to their rôles to-day.

We have already noted—in our account of Herodotus—that a first effect of money was to give freedom of movement and leisure to a number of people who could not otherwise have enjoyed these privileges. And that is the peculiar value of money to mankind. Instead of a worker or helper being paid in kind and in such a way that he is tied as much in his enjoyment as in his labour, money leaves him free to do as he pleases amidst a wide choice of purchasable aids, eases, and indulgences. He may eat his money or drink it or give it to a temple or spend it in learning something or save it against some foreseen occasion. That is the good of money, the freedom of its universal convertibility. But the freedom money gives the poor man is nothing to the freedom money has given the rich man. With money rich men ceased to be tied to lands, houses, stores, flocks and herds. They could change the nature and locality of their possessions with an unheard-of freedom. In the third and second century B.C., this release, this untethering of wealth, began to tell upon the general economic life of the Roman and Hellenized world. People began to buy land and the like not for use, but to sell again at a profit; people borrowed to

buy, speculation developed. No doubt there were bankers in the Babylon of 1,000 B.C., but they lent in a far more limited and solid way, bars of metal and stocks of goods. That earlier world was a world of barter and payment in kind, and it went slowly—and much more staidly and stably—for that reason. In that state the vast realm of China has remained almost down to the present time.

The big cities before Rome were trading and manufacturing cities. Such were Corinth and Carthage and Syracuse. But Rome never produced a very considerable industrial population, and her warehouses never rivalled those of Alexandria. The little port of Ostia was always big enough for her needs. Rome was a political and financial capital, and in the latter respect, at least, she was a new sort of city. She imported profits and tribute, and very little went out from her in return. The wharves of Ostia were chiefly busy unloading corn from Sicily and Africa and loot from all the world.

After the fall of Carthage the Roman imagination went wild with the hitherto unknown possibilities of finance. Money, like most other inventions, had "happened" to mankind, and men had still to develop—to-day they have still to perfect—the science and morality of money. One sees the thing "catching on" in the recorded life and the writings of Cato the Censor. In his early days he was bitterly virtuous against usury; in his later he was devising ingenious schemes for safe usury.

In this curiously interesting century of Roman history we find man after man asking, "What has happened to Rome?" Various answers are made—a decline in religion, a decline from the virtues of the Roman forefathers, Greek "intellectual poison," and the like. We who can look at the problem with a large perspective, can see that what had happened to Rome was "money"—the new freedoms and chances and opportunities that money opened out. Money floated the Romans off the firm ground, everyone was getting hold of money, the majority by the simple expedient of running into debt; the eastward expansion of the empire was very largely a hunt for treasure in strong rooms and temples to keep pace with the hunger of the new need. The Equestrian order, in particular, became the money power.





Photo: Giraudon.

"FATHER TIBER" (LATE ROMAN).

Everyone was developing property. Farmers were giving up corn and cattle, borrowing money, buying slaves, and starting the more intensive cultivation of oil and wine. Money was young in human experience and wild, nobody had it under control. It fluctuated wildly. It was now abundant and now scarce. Men made sly and crude schemes to corner it, to hoard it, to send up prices by releasing hoarded metals. A small body of very shrewd men was growing immensely rich. Many patricians were growing poor and irritated and unscrupulous. Among the middle sort of peoples there was much hope, much adventure, and much more disappointment. The growing mass of the expropriated was permeated by that vague, baffled, and hopeless sense of being explicable bested, which is the preparatory condition for all great revolutionary movements.

### § 3

The first conspicuous leader to appeal to the gathering revolutionary feeling in Italy was Tiberius Gracchus. He looks more like an honest man than any other figure in this period of history, unless it be Scipio Africanus the Elder. At first Tiberius Gracchus was a moderate reformer of a rather reactionary type. He wished to restore the yeoman class to property, very

largely because he believed that class to be the backbone of the army, and his military experience in Spain before and after the destruction of Carthage had impressed upon him the declining efficiency of the legions. He was what we should call nowadays a "Back-to-the-land" man. He did not understand, and few people understand to-day, how much easier it is to shift population from the land into the towns, than to return it to the laborious and simple routines of agricultural life. He wanted to revive the Licinian laws, which had been established when Camillus built his temple of Concord nearly two centuries and a half before (see Chap. xxvii, § 2), so far as they broke up great estates and restrained slave labour.

These Licinian laws had repeatedly been revived and repeatedly lapsed to a dead letter again. It was only when the big proprietors in the Senate opposed this proposal that Tiberius Gracchus turned to the people and began a furious agitation for popular government. He created a commission to inquire into the title of all landowners. In the midst of his activities occurred one of the most extraordinary incidents in history. Attalus, the king of the rich country of Pergamus in Asia Minor, died (133 B.C.), and left his kingdom to the Roman people.

It is difficult for us to understand the motives of this bequest. Pergamus was a country



allied to Rome, and so moderately secure from aggression; and the natural consequence of such a will was to provoke a violent scramble among the senatorial gangs and a dispute between them and the people for the spoils of the new acquisition. Practically Attalus handed over his country to be looted. The act is so amazing that one is driven towards the hypothesis of forgery.<sup>1</sup> There were of course many Italian business people established in the country and a strong party of native rich men in close relations with Rome. To them, no doubt, a coalescence with the Roman system would have been acceptable. Josephus bears witness to such a desire for annexation among the rich men of Syria, a desire running counter to the wishes of both king and people. This Pergamus bequest, astonishing in itself, had the still more astonishing result of producing imitations in other quarters. In 96 B.C. Ptolemy Apion bequeathed Cyrenaica, in North Africa, to the Roman people; in 81 B.C. Alexander II, King of Egypt, followed suit with Egypt, a legacy too big for the courage if not for the appetite of the Senators, and they declined it; in 74 B.C. Nicomedes, King of Bithynia, demised Bithynia. Of these latter testamentary freaks we will say no more here. But it will be manifest how great an opportunity was given Tiberius Gracchus by the bequest of Attalus, of accusing the rich of greed and of proposing to decree the treasures of Attalus to the commonalty. He proposed to use this new wealth to provide seed, stock, and agricultural implements for the resettlement of the land.

His movement was speedily entangled in the complexities of the Roman electoral system—without a simple and straightforward electoral method, all popular movements in all ages necessarily become entangled and maddened in constitutional intricacies, and almost as necessarily lead to bloodshed. It was needed,

if his work was to go on, that Tiberius Gracchus should continue to be tribune, and it was illegal for him to be tribune twice in succession. He overstepped the bounds of legality, and stood for the tribuneship a second time; the peasants who came in from the countryside to vote for him came in armed; the cry that he was aiming at a tyranny, the cry that had long ago destroyed Mælius and Manlius, was raised in the Senate, the friends of "law and order" went to the Capitol in state, accompanied by a rabble of dependents armed with staves and bludgeons; there was a conflict, or rather a massacre of the revolutionaries, in which nearly three hundred people were killed, and Tiberius Gracchus was beaten to death with the fragments of a broken bench by two Senators.

Thereupon the Senators attempted a sort of counter-revolution, and proscribed many of the followers of Tiberius Gracchus; but the state of public opinion was so sullen and threatening that this movement was dropped and Scipio Nasica, who was implicated in the death of Tiberius, though he occupied the position of pontifex maximus, and should have remained in Rome for the public sacrifices which were the duties of that official, went abroad to avoid trouble.

The uneasiness of Italy next roused Scipio Africanus the Younger to propose the enfranchisement of all Italy. But he died suddenly before he could carry the proposal into effect.

Then followed the ambiguous career of Caius Gracchus, the brother of Tiberius, who followed some tortuous "policy" that still exercises the mind of historians. He increased the burthens of taxation laid upon the provinces, it is supposed with the idea of setting the modern financiers (the Equites) against the senatorial landowners. He gave the former the newly bequeathed taxes of Asia to farm, and, what is worse, he gave them control of the special courts set up to prevent extortion. He started enormous public works and particularly the construction of new roads, and he is accused of making a political use of the contracts. He revived the proposal to enfranchise Italy. He increased the distribution of subsidized cheap corn to the Roman citizens. . . . Here we cannot attempt to disentangle his schemes, much less to judge him. But that his policy was offensive to the groups

<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence of forgery and no contemporary suggestion of the sort. The bequest of Attalus, even if it was a forgery (Mommsen accepts it, iii. p. 55), is of importance, as showing that a great many people did think that Rome was the best administrator. Otherwise, the story (if it is only a story) could not have caught on. *A priori* there seems good reason for the testament. The Attalid dynasty was "petering out"; there were troublesome Gauls about (Mommsen, iii. p. 53).—J. L. M., and E. B.





THE FORUM, ROME.

The Column of Phocas, the Tabularium, and the Arch of Septimius Severus.

that controlled the Senate there can be no doubt whatever. He was massacred by the champions of "law and order," with about three thousand of his followers, in the streets of Rome in 121 B.C. His decapitated head was carried to the Senate on the point of a pike.

(A reward of its weight in gold, says Plutarch, had been offered for this trophy; and its captor, acting in the true spirit of a champion of "big business," filled the brain-case with lead on its way to the scales.)

In spite of these prompt firm measures the Senate was not to enjoy the benefits of peace and the advantages of a control of the imperial resources for long. Within ten years the people were in revolt again.

In 118 B.C. the throne of Numidia, the semi-barbaric kingdom that had arisen in North Africa upon the ruins of the civilized Carthaginian power, was seized by a certain able Jugurtha, who had served with the Roman armies in Spain, and had a knowledge of the Roman character. He provoked the military

intervention of Rome. But the Romans found that their military power, under a Senate of financiers and landlords, was very different from what it had been even in the days of the younger Scipio Africanus. "Jugurtha bought over the Commissioners sent out to watch him, the Senators charged with their prosecution, and the generals in command against him."<sup>1</sup> There is a mistaken Roman proverb: '*pecunia non olet*' (money does not stink), for the money of Jugurtha stank even in Rome. There was a great popular outcry, and a capable soldier of lowly origin, Marius, was carried to the consulship (107 B.C.) on the wave of popular indignation. Marius made no attempt on the model of the Gracchi to restore the backbone of the army by rehabilitating the yeoman class. He was a professional soldier with a high standard of efficiency and a disposition to take short cuts. He simply raised troops from among the poor, whether countrymen or townsmen, paid them well, disciplined them thoroughly, and

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero.



(106 B.C.) ended the seven years' war with Jugurtha by bringing that chieftain in chains to Rome. It did not occur to anybody that incidentally Marius had also created a professional army with no interest to hold it together but its pay. He then held on to the consulship more or less illegally for several years, and in 102 and 101 B.C. repelled a threatening move of the Germans (who thus appear in our history for the first time), who were raiding through Gaul towards Italy. He gained two victories; one on Italian soil. He was hailed as the saviour of his country, a second Camillus (100 B.C.).

The social tensions of the time mocked that comparison with Camillus. The Senate benefited by the greater energy in foreign affairs and the increased military efficiency that Marius had introduced, but the sullen, shapeless discontent of the mass of the people was still seeking some effective outlet. The rich grew richer and the poor poorer. It was impossible to stifle the consequences of that process for ever by political trickery. The Italian people were still unenfranchised. Two extreme democratic leaders, Saturninus and Glaucia, were assassinated, but that familiar senatorial remedy failed to assuage the populace on this occasion. In 92 B.C. an aristocratic official, Rutilius Rufus, who had tried to restrain the exactions of the financiers in Asia Minor, was condemned on a charge of corruption so manifestly trumped up that it deceived no one; and in 91 B.C., Livius Drusus, a newly elected tribune of the people, who was making capital out of the trial of Rutilius Rufus, was assassinated. He had proposed a general enfranchisement of the Italians, and he had foreshadowed not only another land law, but a general abolition of debts. Yet for all this vigour on the part of the senatorial usurers, landgrabbers, and fore-stallers, the hungry and the anxious were still insurgent. The murder of Drusus was the last drop in the popular cup; Italy blazed into a desperate insurrection.

There followed two years of bitter civil war, the Social War. It was a war between the idea of a united Italy and the idea of the rule of the Roman Senate. It was not a "social" war in the modern sense, but a war between Rome and her Italian allies (allies = *Socii*). "Roman generals, trained in the traditions of

colonial warfare, marched ruthlessly up and down Italy, burning farms, sacking towns, and carrying off men, women, and children, to sell them in the open market or work them in gangs upon their estates."<sup>1</sup> Marius and an aristocratic general, Sulla, who had been with him in Africa and who was his bitter rival, both commanded on the side of Rome. But though the insurgents experienced defeats and looting, neither of these generals brought the war to an end. It was ended in a manner (89 B.C.) by the practical surrender of the Roman Senate to the idea of reform. The spirit was taken out of the insurrection by the concession of their demands "in principle"; and then as soon as the rebels had dispersed, the usual cheating of the new voters, by such methods as we have explained in § 1 of this chapter, was resumed.

By the next year (88 B.C.) the old round had begun again. It was mixed up with the personal intrigues of Marius and Sulla against each other; but the struggle had taken on another complexion through the army reforms of Marius, which had created a new type of legionary, a landless professional soldier with no interest in life but pay and plunder, and with no feeling of loyalty except to a successful general. A popular tribune, Sulpicius, was bringing forward some new laws affecting debt, and the consuls were dodging the storm by declaring a suspension of public business. Then came the usual resort to violence, and the followers of Sulpicius drove the consuls from the forum. But here it is that the new forces which the new army had made possible came into play. King Mithridates of Pontus, the Hellenized king of the southern shores of the Black Sea east of Bithynia, was pressing Rome into war. One of the proposed laws of Sulpicius was that Marius should command the armies sent against this Mithridates. Whereupon Sulla marched the army he had commanded throughout the Social War to Rome, Marius and Sulpicius fled, and a new age, an age of military pronunciamientos, began.

Of how Sulla had himself made commander against Mithridates and departed, and of how legions friendly to Marius then seized power, how Marius returned to Italy and enjoyed a thorough massacre of his political opponents

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero.



and died, sated, of fever, we cannot tell in any detail. But one measure during the Marian reign of terror did much to relieve the social tension, and that was the abolition of three-quarters of all outstanding debts. Nor can we tell here how Sulla made a discreditable peace with Mithridates (who had massacred a hundred thousand Italians in Asia Minor) in order to bring his legions back to Rome, defeat the Marians at the battle of the Colline Gate of Rome, and reverse the arrangements of Marius. Sulla restored law and order by the proscription and execution of

over five thousand people. He desolated large parts of Italy, restored the Senate to power, repealed many of the recent laws, though he was unable to restore the cancelled burden of debt, and then, feeling bored by politics and having amassed great riches, he retired with an air of dignity into private life, gave himself up to abominable vices, and so presently died, eaten up with some disgusting disease produced by debauchery.<sup>1</sup>

#### § 4

Political life in Italy was not so much tranquillized as stunned by the massacres and confiscations of Marius and Sulla. The scale upon which this history is planned will not permit us to tell here of the great adventurers who,

**The Era  
of the  
Adventurer  
Generals.**

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch. To which, however, G. M. adds the following note. "It is generally believed that Sulla died through bursting a blood-vessel in a fit of temper. The story of abominable vices seems to be only the regular slander of the Roman mob against anyone who did not live in public."

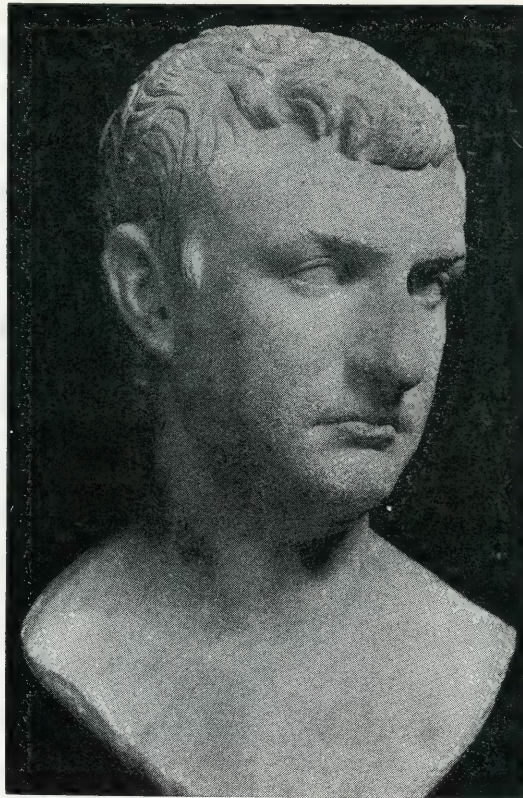


Photo: Brogi.

POMPEY THE GREAT.

relying more and more on the support of the legions, presently began to scheme and intrigue again for dictatorial power in Rome. In 73 B.C. all Italy was terrified by a rising of the slaves, and particularly of the gladiators, led by a gladiator from Thessaly, Spartacus. He and seventy others had fled out from a gladiatorial "farm" at Capua. Similar risings had already occurred in Sicily. The forces under Spartacus necessarily became a miscellaneous band drawn from east and west, without any common idea except the idea of dispersing and getting home; nevertheless, he held out in

Southern Italy for two years, using the then apparently extinct crater of Vesuvius for a time as a natural fortress. The Italians, for all their love of gladiatorial display, failed to appreciate this conversion of the whole country into an arena, this bringing of the gladiatorial sword to the door, and when at last Spartacus was overthrown, their terror changed to frantic cruelty, six thousand of his captured followers were crucified—long miles of nailed and drooping victims—along the Appian Way.

Here we cannot deal at any length with Lucullus, who invaded Pontus and fought Mithridates, and brought the cultivated cherry-tree to Europe; nor can we tell how ingeniously Pompey the Great stole the triumph and most of the prestige Lucullus had won in Armenia beyond Pontus. Lucullus, like Sulla, retired into an opulent private life, but with more elegance and with a more gracious end. We cannot relate in any detail how Julius Cæsar accumulated reputation in the west, by conquering Gaul, defeating the German tribes upon



the Rhine, and pushing a punitive raid across the Straits of Dover into Britain. More and more important grow the legions; less and less significant are the Senate and the assemblies of Rome. But there is a certain grim humour about the story of Crassus that we cannot altogether neglect.

This Crassus was a great money-lender and forestaller. He was a typical man of the new Equestrian type, the social equivalent of a modern munition profiteer. He first grew rich by buying up the property of those proscribed by Sulla. His earliest exploits in the field were against Spartacus, whom finally he crushed by great payments and exertions after a prolonged and expensive campaign. He then, as the outcome of complicated bargains, secured the command in the east and prepared to emulate the glories of Lucullus, who had pushed east from Pergamus and Bithynia into Pontus, and of Pompey, who had completed the looting of Armenia.

His experiences serve to demonstrate the gross ignorance with which the Romans were conducting their affairs at that time. He crossed the Euphrates, expecting to find in Persia another Hellenized kingdom like Pontus. But, as we have already intimated, the great reservoirs of nomadic peoples that stretched round from the Danube across Russia into Central Asia, had been raining back into the lands between the Caspian Sea and the Indus that Alexander had conquered for Hellenism. Crassus found himself against the "Scythian" again; against mobile tribes of horsemen led by a monarch in Median costume.<sup>1</sup> The particular variety of "Scythian" he encountered was called the Parthian. It is possible that in the Parthians a Mongolian (Turanian) element was now mingled with the Aryan strain; but the campaign of Crassus beyond the Euphrates is curiously like the campaign of Darius beyond the Danube; there is the same heavy thrusting of an infantry force against elusive light horsemen. But Crassus was less quick than Darius to realize the need of withdrawal, and the Parthians were better bowmen than the Scythians Darius met. They seem to have had some sort of noisy projectile of unusual strength and force, something different from

an ordinary arrow.<sup>2</sup> The campaign culminated in that two days' massacre of the hot, thirsty, hungry, and weary Roman legions, which is known as the battle of Carrhæ (53 B.C.) They toiled through the sand, charging an enemy who always evaded their charge and rode round them and shot them to pieces. Twenty thousand of them were killed, and ten thousand marched on eastward as prisoners into slavery in Iran.

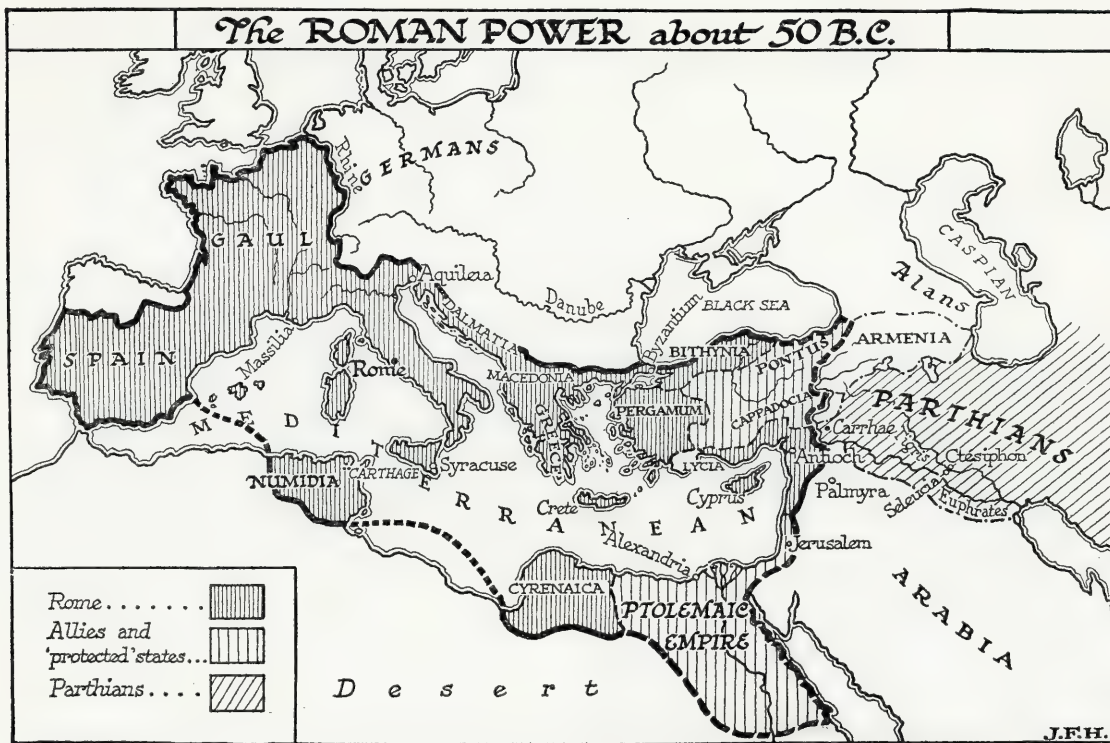
What became of Crassus is not clearly known. There is a story, probably invented for our moral benefit and suggested by his usuries, that he fell alive into the hands of the Parthians and was killed by having molten gold poured down his throat.

But this disaster has a very great significance indeed to our general history of mankind. It serves to remind us that from the Rhine to the Euphrates, all along to the north of the Alps and Danube and Black Sea, stretched one continuous cloud of nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples, whom the statescraft of imperial Rome was never able to pacify and civilize, nor her military science subdue. We have already called attention to a map showing how the Second Babylonian Empire, the Chaldean Empire, lay like a lamb in the embrace of the Median power. In exactly the same way the Roman Empire lay like a lamb in the embrace of this great crescent of outer barbarians. Not only was Rome never able to thrust back or assimilate that superincumbent crescent, but she was never able to organize the Mediterranean Sea into a secure and orderly system of communication between one part of her empire and another. Quite unknown as yet to Rome, the Mongolian tribes from North-eastern Asia, the Huns and their kin, walled back and driven out from China by the Tsi and Han dynasties,

<sup>2</sup> The bow was probably the composite bow, so-called because it is made of several plates (five or so) of horn, like the springs of a carriage: it discharges a high-speed arrow with a twang. This was the bow the Mongols used. This short composite bow (it was not a long bow) was quite old in human experience. It was the bow of Odysseus; the Assyrians had it in a modified form. It went out in Greece, but it survived as the Mongol bow. It was quite short, very stiff to pull, with a flat trajectory, a remarkable range, and a great noise (cp. Homer's reference to the twang of the bow). It went out in the Mediterranean because the climate was not good for it, and because there were insufficient animals to supply the horn.—J. L. M.

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch.





were drifting and pressing westward, mixing with the Parthians, the Scythians, the Teutons and the like, or driving them before them.

Never at any time did the Romans succeed in pushing their empire beyond Mesopotamia, and upon Mesopotamia their hold was never very secure. Before the close of the republic that power of assimilation which had been the secret of their success was giving way to "patriotic" exclusiveness and "patriotic" greed. Rome plundered and destroyed Asia Minor and Babylonia, which were the necessary basis for an eastward extension to India, just as she had destroyed and looted Carthage and so had no foothold for extension into Africa, and just as she had destroyed Corinth and so cut herself off from an easy way into the heart of Greece. Western European writers, impressed by the fact that later on Rome Romanized and civilized Gaul and South Britain and restored the scene of her earlier devastations in Spain to prosperity, are apt to ignore that over far greater areas to the south and east her influence was to weaken and so restore to barbarism the far wider conquests of Hellenic civilization.

## § 5

But among the politicians of Italy in the first century B.C. there were no maps of Germany and Russia, Africa and Central Asia, and no sufficient intelligence to study them had they existed.

Rome never developed the fine curiosities that sent Hanno and the sailors of Pharaoh Necho down the coasts of Africa. When, in the first century B.C., the emissaries of the Han dynasty reached the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, they found only stories of a civilization that had receded. The memory of Alexander still lived in these lands, but of Rome men only knew that Pompey had come to the western shores of the Caspian and gone away again, and that Crassus had been destroyed. Rome was pre-occupied at home. What mental energy remained over in the Roman citizen from the attempt to grow personally rich and keep personally safe was intent upon the stratagems and strokes and counter-strokes of the various adventurers who were now manifestly grappling for the supreme power.

It is the custom of historians to treat these struggles with extreme respect. In particular



the figure of Julius Cæsar is set up as if it were a star of supreme brightness and importance in the history of mankind.<sup>1</sup> Yet a dispassionate consideration of the known facts fails altogether to justify this demi-god theory of Cæsar. Not even that precipitate wrecker of splendid possibilities, Alexander the Great, has been so magnified and dressed up for the admiration of careless and uncritical readers. There is a type of scholar who, to be plain, sits and in-

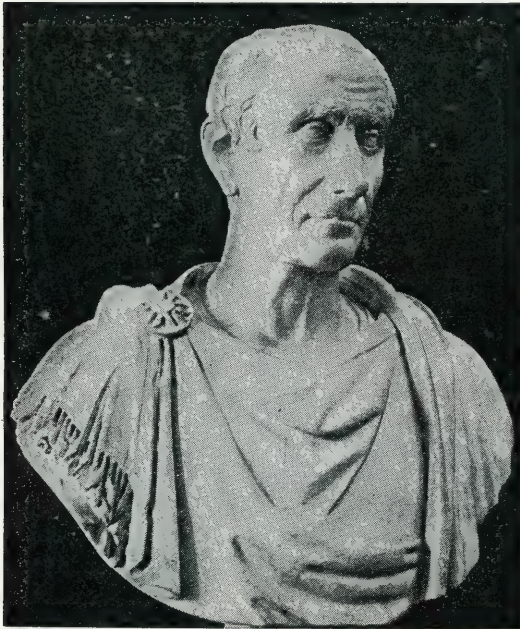


Photo: Alinari.

JULIUS CÆSAR.  
(In the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.)

vents marvellous world policies for the more conspicuous figures in history with the merest scraps of justification or with no justification at all. We are told that Alexander planned the conquest of Carthage and Rome and the complete subjugation of India, and that only his death shattered these schemes. What we know for certain is that he conquered the Persian Empire, and never went far beyond its boundaries; and that when he was supposed to be making these vast and noble plans, he was in fact indulging in such monstrous antics as his mourning for his favourite Hephæstion, and as his main occupation he was drinking himself to

death. So too Julius Cæsar is credited with the intention of doing just that one not impossible thing which would have secured the Roman Empire from its ultimate collapse—namely, the systematic conquest and civilization of Europe as far as the Baltic and the Dnieper. He was to have marched upon Germany, says Plutarch, through Parthia and Scythia, round the north of the Caspian and Black Seas. Yet the fact we have to reconcile with this wise and magnificent project is that at the crest of his power, Cæsar, already a bald, middle-aged man, past the graces and hot impulses of youthful love, spent the better part of a year in Egypt, feasting and entertaining himself in amorous pleasantries with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. And afterwards he brought her with him to Rome, where her influence over him was bitterly resented. Such complications with a woman mark the elderly sensualist or sentimentalist—he was fifty-four at the commencement of the *affaire*—rather than the master-ruler of men.

On the side of the superman idea of Cæsar, we have to count a bust in the Naples Museum. It represents a fine and intellectual face, very noble in its expression, and we can couple with that the story that his head, even at birth, was unusually large and finely formed. But there is really no satisfying evidence that this well-known bust does represent Cæsar, and it is hard to reconcile its austere serenity with the reputation for violent impulse and disorderliness that clung to him. Other busts of a quite different man are also, with more probability, ascribed to him.

There can be little doubt that he was a dissolute and extravagant young man—the scandals cluster thick about his sojourn in Bithynia, whither he fled from Sulla; he was the associate of the reprobate Clodius and the conspirator Catiline, and there is nothing in his political career to suggest any aim higher or remoter than his own advancement to power, and all the personal glory and indulgence that power makes possible. We will not attempt to tell here of the turns and devices of his career. Although he was of an old patrician family, he came into politics as the brilliant darling of the people. He spent great sums and incurred heavy debts to provide public festivals on the most lavish scale. He opposed the

<sup>1</sup> For a good compact account of Cæsar, much more appreciative of him than our text, see Warde Fowler's *Julius Cæsar*.



tradition of Sulla, and cherished the memory of Marius, who was his uncle by marriage. For a time he worked in conjunction with Crassus and Pompey, but after the death of Crassus he and Pompey came into conflict. By 49 B.C. he and Pompey, with their legions, he from the west and Pompey from the east, were fighting openly for predominance in the Roman state. He had broken the law by bringing his legions across the Rubicon, which was the boundary between his command and Italy proper. At the battle of Pharsalus in Thes-saly (48 B.C.), Pompey was routed, and, fleeing to Egypt, was murdered, leaving Cæsar more master of the Roman world than ever Sulla had been.

He was then created dictator for ten years in 46 B.C., and early in 45 B.C. he was made dictator for life. This was monarchy; if not hereditary monarchy, it was at least electoral life monarchy. It was unlimited opportunity to do his best for the world. And by the spirit and quality of his use of this dictatorial power during these four years we are bound to judge him. A certain reorganization of local administration he effected, and he seems to have taken up what was a fairly obvious necessity of the times, a project for the restoration of the two murdered seaports of Corinth and Carthage, whose destruction had wrecked the sea-life of the Mediterranean. But much more evident was the influence of Cleopatra and Egypt upon his mind. Like Alexander before him, his head seems to have been turned by the king-god tradition, assisted no doubt in his case by the adulation of that charming hereditary goddess,

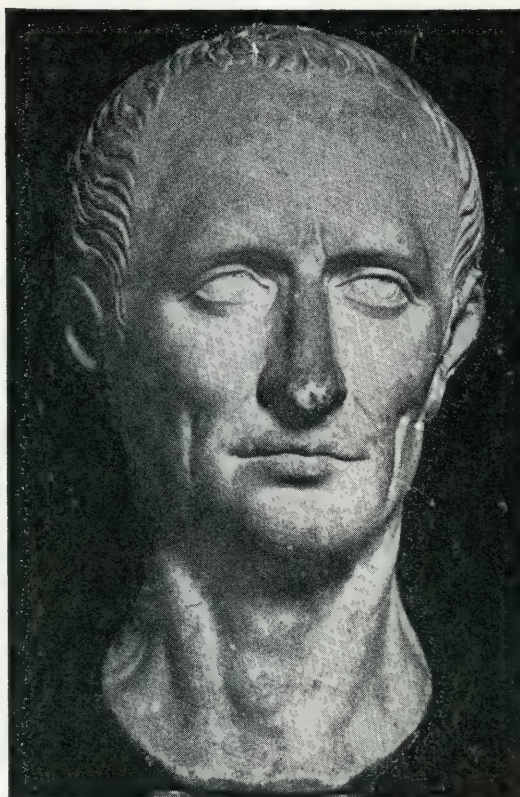


Photo: Mansell.

ANOTHER BUST ASCRIBED TO JULIUS CÆSAR  
(British Museum).

"Undoubtedly a close copy of an authentic original."—Stobart.

Cleopatra. We find evidence of exactly that same conflict upon the score of divine pretensions, between him and his personal friends, that we have already recorded in the case of Alexander. So far as the Hellenized east was concerned, the paying of divine honours to rulers was a familiar idea; but it was still repulsive to the lingering Aryanism of Rome.

Antony, who had been his second in command at Pharsalus, was one of the chief of his flatterers. Plutarch describes a scene at the public games in which Antony tried to force a crown upon Cæsar, which Cæsar, after a

little coyness and in face of the manifested displeasure of the crowd, refused. But he had adopted the ivory sceptre and throne, which were the traditional insignia of the ancient kings of Rome. His image was carried amidst that of the gods in the opening *pompa* of the arena, and his statue was set up in a temple with an inscription, "To the Unconquerable God!" Priests even were appointed for his godhead. These things are not the symptoms of great-mindedness, but of a common man's megalomania. Cæsar's record of vulgar scheming for the tawdriest mockeries of personal worship is a silly and shameful record; it is incompatible with the idea that he was a wise and wonderful superman setting the world to rights.

Finally (44 B.C.) he was assassinated by a group of his own friends and supporters, to whom these divine aspirations had become intolerable. He was beset in the Senate, and stabbed in three and twenty places, dying at the foot of the statue of his fallen rival Pompey the



Great. The scene marks the complete demoralization of the old Roman governing body. Brutus, the ringleader of the murderers, would have addressed the senators, but, confronted by this crisis, they were scuttling off in every direction. For the best part of a day Rome did not know what to make of this event; the murderers marched about with their bloody weapons through an undecided city, with no one gainsaying them and only a few joining them; then public opinion turned against them, some of their houses were attacked, and they had to hide and fly for their lives.

### § 6

But the trend of things was overwhelmingly towards monarchy. For thirteen years more

**The End of the Republic.** the struggle of personalities went on. One single man is to be noted as inspired by broad ideas and an ambition not entirely egoistic, Cicero. He was a man of modest origin, whose eloquence and literary power had won him a prominent place in the Senate. He was a little tainted by the abusive tradition of Demosthenes, nevertheless he stands out, a noble and pathetically ineffective figure, pleading with the now utterly degenerate, base, and cowardly Senate for the high ideals of the Republic. He was a writer of great care and distinction, and the orations and private letters he has left us make him one of the most real and living figures of this period to the modern reader.<sup>1</sup> He was prosecuted and killed in 43 B.C., the year after the murder of Julius Cæsar, and his head and hands were nailed up in the Roman forum. Octavian, who became at last the monarch of Rome, seems to have made an effort to save Cicero; that murder was certainly not his crime.

Here we cannot trace out the tangle of alliances and betrayals that ended in the ascendancy of this Octavian, the adopted heir of Julius Cæsar. The fate of the chief figures is interwoven with that of Cleopatra.

After the death of Cæsar, she set herself to capture the emotions and vanity of Antony, a much younger man than Cæsar, with whom she was probably already acquainted. For a time Octavian and Antony and a third figure,

<sup>1</sup> See Strachan Davidson's *Cicero*, or, better, his own letters to Atticus.

Lepidus, divided the Roman world just as Cæsar and Pompey had divided it before their final conflict. Octavian took the hardier west, and consolidated his power; Antony had the more gorgeous east—and Cleopatra. To Lepidus fell that picked bone, Carthaginian Africa. He seems to have been a good man of good traditions, set upon the restoration of



Photo: Bonfils.

CLEOPATRA.  
From an Egyptian relief.

Carthage rather than upon wealth or personal vanities. The mind of Antony succumbed to those same ancient ideas of divine kingship that had already proved too much for the mental equilibrium of Julius Cæsar. In the company of Cleopatra he gave himself up to love, amusements, and a dream of sensuous glory, until Octavian felt that the time was ripe to end these two Egyptian divinities.



In 32 B.C. Octavian induced the Senate to depose Antony from the command of the east, and proceeded to attack him. A great naval battle at Actium (31 B.C.) was decided by the sudden desertion of Cleopatra with sixty ships in the midst of the fight. It is quite impossible for us to decide now whether this was due to premeditated treachery or to the sudden whim of a charming woman. The departure of these ships threw the fleet of Antony into hopeless confusion, which was increased by the headlong flight of this model lover in pursuit. He



Photo: Mansell.

CLEOPATRA.

From a Roman bust in the British Museum; obviously the same woman as the Egyptian portrait, but by a less appreciative artist.

went off in a swift galley after her without informing his commanders. He left his followers to fight and die as they thought fit, and for a time they were incredulous that he had gone. The subsequent encounter of the two lovers and their reconciliation is a matter for ironical speculation on the part of Plutarch.

Octavian's net closed slowly round his rival. It is not improbable that there was some sort of understanding between Octavian and Cleopatra, as perhaps in the time of Julius Cæsar there may have been between the queen and Antony. Antony gave way to much mournful posturing, varied by love scenes, during this last

stage of his little drama. For a time he posed as an imitator of the cynic Timon, as one who had lost all faith in mankind, though one may think that his deserted sailors at Actium had better reason for such an attitude. Finally he found himself and Cleopatra besieged by Octavian in Alexandria. There were some sallies and minor successes, and Antony was loud with challenges to Octavian to decide the matter by personal combat. Being led to believe that Cleopatra had committed suicide, this star of romance stabbed himself, but so ineffectually as to die lingeringly, and he was carried off to expire in her presence (30 B.C.).

Plutarch's account of Antony, which was derived very largely from witnesses who had seen and known him, describes him as of heroic mould. He is compared to the demi-god Hercules, from whom indeed he claimed descent, and also to the Indian Bacchus. There is a disgusting but illuminating description of a scene in the Senate when he attempted to speak while drunk, and was overtaken by one of the least dignified concomitants of intoxication.

For a little while Cleopatra still clung to life, and perhaps to the hope that she might reduce Octavian to the same divine rôle that had already been played by Julius Cæsar and Antony. She had an interview with Octavian, in which she presented herself as beauty in distress and very lightly clad. But when it became manifest that Octavian lacked the godlike spark, and that his care for her comfort and welfare was dictated chiefly by his desire to exhibit her in a triumphal procession through the streets of Rome, she also committed suicide. An asp was smuggled to her past the Roman sentries, concealed in a basket of figs, and by its fangs she died.

Octavian seems to have been almost entirely free from the divine aspirations of Julius Cæsar and Antony. He was neither God nor romantic hero; he was a man. He was a man of far greater breadth and capacity than any other player in this last act of the Republican drama in Rome. All things considered, he was perhaps the best thing that could have happened to Rome at that time. He "voluntarily resigned the extraordinary powers which he had held since 43, and, to quote his own words, 'handed over the republic to the control of the senate and



the people of Rome.' The old constitutional machinery was once more set in motion; the senate, assembly, and magistrates resumed their functions, and Octavian himself was hailed as the 'restorer of the commonwealth and the champion of freedom.' It was not so easy to determine what relation he himself, the actual

master of the Roman world, should occupy towards this revived republic. His abdication, in any real sense of the word, would have simply thrown everything back into confusion. The interests of peace and order required that he should retain at least the substantial part of his authority; and this object was in fact accomplished, and the rule of the emperors founded, in a manner which has no parallel in history. Any revival of the kingly title was out of the question, and Octavian himself expressly refused the dictatorship. Nor was any new office created or any new official title invented for his benefit. But by senate and people he was invested according to the old

constitutional forms with certain powers, as many citizens had been before him, and so took his place by the side of the lawfully appointed magistrates of the republic; only, to mark his pre-eminent dignity, as the first of them all, the senate decreed that he should take as an additional cognomen that of 'Augustus,' while in common parlance he was henceforth styled Princeps, a simple title of courtesy, familiar to republican usage and conveying no other idea than that of a recognized primacy and precedence over his fellow-citizens. The ideal

sketched by Cicero in his *De Republica*, of a constitutional president of a free republic, was apparently realized; but it was only in appearance. For in fact the special prerogatives conferred upon Octavian gave him back in substance the autocratic authority he had resigned, and as between the restored republic and its new *princeps* the balance of power was overwhelmingly on the side of the latter."<sup>1</sup>

## § 7

In this manner it was that Roman republicanism ended in a *princeps* or ruling prince, and the first great experiment in a self-governing community on a scale larger than that of tribe or city, collapsed and failed.

The essence of its failure was that it could not sustain unity. In its early stages its citizens, both patrician and plebeian, had a certain tradition of justice and good faith, and of the loyalty of all citizens to the law, and of the goodness of the law for all citizens; it clung to this idea of

the importance of the law and of law-abidingness nearly into the first century B.C. But the unforeseen invention and development of money, the temptations and disruptions of imperial expansion, the entanglement of electoral methods, weakened and swamped this tradition by presenting old issues in new disguises under which the judgment did not recognize them, and by enabling men to be

<sup>1</sup> H. S. Jones in *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, article "Rome." His contribution is admirably verified and exact, and we are greatly indebted to it.

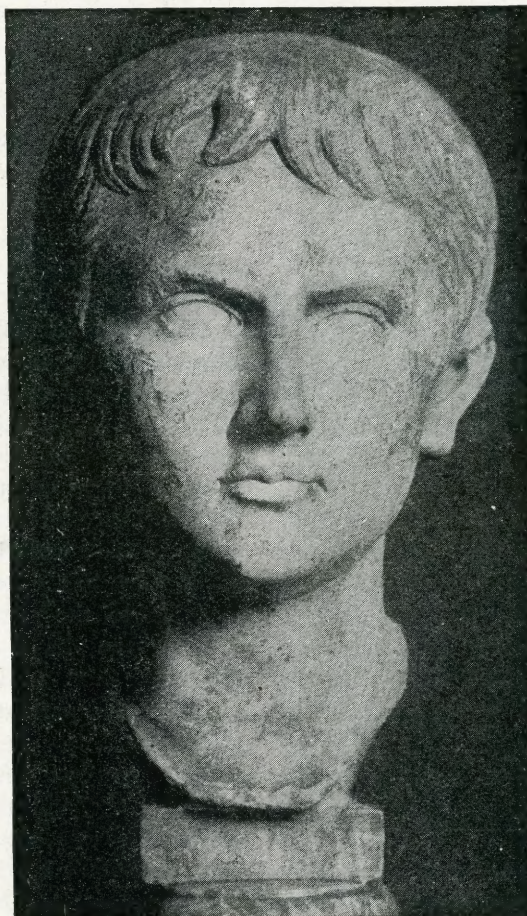


Photo: Mansell.

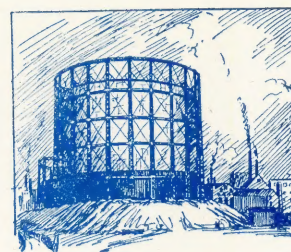
AUGUSTUS, WHEN A BOY (British Museum).



# A CENTURY OF HISTORY

## THE STORY OF A GREAT DISCOVERY

### V



VAN HELMONT, who lived in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, was the first to apply the word "gas" to the vapours known before his time by scientists under the generic term of "Spiritus Silvestris." In his "Treatise de Flatibus" he says: "Therefore the live coal and generally whatsoever bodies do not immediately depart into water, nor yet are fixed, do necessarily belch forth a wild spirit or breath. Suppose thou, that of 62 pounds of Oaken Coal, one pound of ashes is composed. Therefore, the 61 remaining pounds are the wild spirit, which, also being fixed, cannot depart, the vessel being shut. I call this Spirit, unknown hitherto, by the new name of Gas, which can neither be retained by vessels, nor reduced into a visible body, unless the seed be first extinguished."

Later in the seventeenth century Van Helmont's experiments were repeated in the United Kingdom by that great natural philosopher, the Hon. Robert Boyle. His chief work in this sphere of enquiry was to distinguish between the effect of combustion and distillation, and in 1680 he proved that "air" could be produced by artificial means, collecting it in a condition unmixed with ordinary atmospheric air. Among the papers left by Boyle at his death in 1691 is a record of a highly striking experiment carried out by the Reverend John Clayton, D.D. This was no less than the actual distillation of coal and the successful collection of the gas resulting therefrom. The record by Dr. Clayton, who was rector of Crofton, near Wakefield, was embodied in a communication to Boyle, and a copy appeared in the Transactions of the Royal Society, 1739-40.

The date of this communication is problematical, but it has been suggested that it was in 1664. Its full title is as follows: "An Experiment Concerning the Spirit of Coals, *inter alia*, in a letter to the Hon. Mr. Boyle by the late Reverend John Clayton, D.D., communicated by the Right Reverend Father in God Robert Lord Bishop of Cork to the Right Hon. Earl of Egmont, F.R.S."

The experiment took place near Wigan, where a spring of water one day amazed the local residents by apparently taking fire and burning steadily. Previous to Dr. Clayton's experiment, a Mr. Thomas Shirley had examined

this mysterious well, and proved that the water took fire in appearance only.

To quote from his account, which appeared in the "Philosophical Transactions" some years subsequently: "This boyling I conceived to proceed from the Eruption of some bituminous or sulphurous Fumes; considering this place was not above 30 or 40 yards distant from the mouth of a Coal-pit there. And indeed Wigan, Ashton, and the whole Country, for many miles compass, is underlaid with coal. Then applying my hand to the surface of the Burning place of the Water, I found a strong breath, as it were a Wind, to bear against my hand." The next stage in Mr. Shirley's investigations was the construction of a dam, and then, when he had drained away the water, he applied "a burning Candle to the surface of the dry Earth at the same point, where the Water burned before; the Fumes took fire, and burned very bright and vigorous. The Cone of the Flame ascended a foot and a half from the Superficies of the Earth. The Basis of it was of the compass of a Man's hat about the brims. I then caused a Bucket-full of Water to be poured on the fire, by which it was presently quenched, as well as my companions' laughter was stopped, who then began to think Water did not burn." Thus far Mr. Shirley, who, like most discoverers, had to face a certain amount of popular ridicule before he proved his point. But Mr. Shirley only discovered the existence of "natural" gas; it remained to Dr. Clayton to find that the same gas could be distilled from crude coal, and afterwards stored in vessels.

Dr. Clayton visited the Wigan well, or ditch as he called it, with a view to making a thorough test of its possibilities. His visit occurred after a long-continued season of rain, when, no doubt to his disappointment, the natural gas would not catch fire, though a lighted paper was waved all over the surface of the water. Still, however, the Doctor pursued his experiments, and on the ground being dug for the depth of about half a yard, found what he calls "a Shelly Coal, and the Candle being then put down into the Hole, the Air caught Fire, and continued burning."

The description of the remaining and more interesting portion of the Doctor's experiment must be left over to the next chapter.

(To be continued)





# Fry's Cocoa

PURE  
BREAKFAST



GREAT SCOTT! WHAT A FIND.